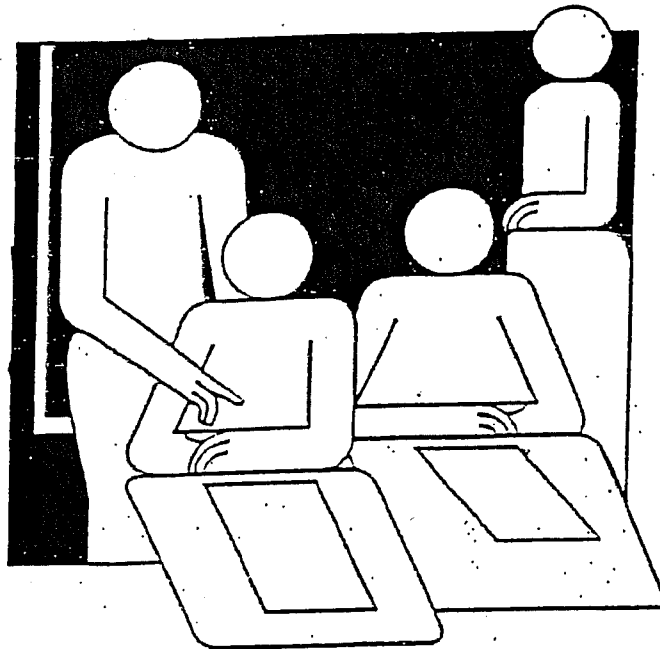


The Paraeducator and Teacher Team:

Strategies for Success



Paraeducator Supervision 11th Edition Participant Workbook

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SUPERVISING PARAPROFESSIONALS IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

Effective Strategies for Administrators and Teachers

Workshop/Class Overview

The purpose of the workshop is to provide the core knowledge and skills to manage, supervise and direct the work of paraeducators. Specifically, participants will refine their knowledge of the characteristics of paraprofessionals in education, the distinction between teacher and paraeducator roles and responsibilities, and ethical issues. They will develop skills in: (1) establishing working relationships; (2) assessing personal supervisory skills; (3) building work schedules and instructional plans; and, (4) using feedback to improve communication.

The number of paraprofessionals supporting the learning and behavioral needs of students in various educational settings has steadily and dramatically increased over the years. There has been an expansion in the roles and responsibilities of paraprofessionals in order to: (1) meet the diverse needs of students, including students with disabilities; and (2) facilitate classrooms that are more inclusive. Administrators, general and special education teachers, and student support services professionals rely heavily on paraprofessionals to assist and support teacher directed instruction. However, many educators have received little or no training to assist them in effectively supervising and directing the work of paraprofessionals.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and the No Child Left Behind Act both address new standards on the training, and supervision of paraprofessionals. The inclusion of paraprofessionals in these significant pieces of legislation underscores their importance to the education team. Both laws clearly state that paraprofessionals work under the direct supervision of teachers.

This workshop is designed to examine the issues, roles, and responsibilities of administrators and teachers who direct, manage, and supervise the work of paraprofessionals. The workshop will provide practical information and activities to enhance the knowledge and skills of administrators, teachers, and student support services professionals in effectively supervising paraprofessionals in various educational settings. Specific strategies and guidelines will be shared to assist schools/districts in improving the performance, supervision, and professional development of paraprofessionals.

Participants in this workshop/class will:

- Define the specific roles and responsibilities of all instructional team members in supporting paraprofessionals as educational team members;
- Develop skills and strategies to include paraprofessionals as educational partners in effectively improving the quality of instruction, students' learning, and the overall achievement of all students, including students with disabilities;
- Examine the quality indicators of effective staff development;
- Explore common barriers to effective supervision of paraprofessionals and identify solutions;
- Develop skills and strategies to maximize the support of paraprofessionals in service delivery;
- Understand the provisions in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and the No Child Left Behind Act regarding paraprofessionals and their supervisors;
- Examine standards and policy issues affecting paraprofessional qualification; and
- Examine the professional and ethical guidelines for the utilization of paraprofessionals in instruction.

ACTIVITY: WORKSHOP PRE-TEST

1. Define paraeducator.
2. What are the benefits in utilizing paraeducators within education programs? For students? For teachers?
3. Explain why supervision of paraeducators is essential and required under federal guidelines.
4. What are the teacher's responsibilities to planning for the paraeducator?
5. What should be included in a paraeducator's job description?
6. What should be included in the orientation provided to a paraeducator?
7. Why is a team approach important?
8. Explain the importance of setting aside a regular conference time for the teacher and paraeducator. What are appropriate topics for the conference?
9. What are the Federal regulations regarding paraeducator training and supervision?
10. In preparing the paraeducator to assist in and supporting instruction, what steps should the teacher take?

OVERVIEW

Team Work: Key to Success for Teachers and Paraeducators

The interdependent working relationship of today's paraeducators, teachers, and principals is often like a jigsaw puzzle. Unfortunately, they don't have a picture on the front of a box to know what the puzzle is supposed to look like when it's finished. Sometimes they don't even have all the pieces. That's why, in today's education climate, the most successful schools operate as a team. School personnel understand the importance of a good working relationship and are focused on team goals. When paraeducators, teachers, and principals team up to connect the pieces of the puzzle, students are the ultimate beneficiaries. (Gerlach, K.P., *Let's Team Up*, 2006)

The changing landscape of public education has had a significant impact on the roles of the personnel who serve in our schools. Teacher shortages, increasing numbers of English language learners and the rising enrollment of students with disabilities and other special needs are just some of the factors that make the need for a dynamic school team more necessary than ever. In this challenging environment, paraeducators play an increasingly critical role in improving student achievement. (Gerlach, K.P. 2006, *Let's Team Up*, National Education Association)

A common thread across definitions of teams is that teamwork can be defined as a process among partners who share mutual goals and work together to achieve the goals. Teamwork allows people to discuss their work together and, as a result, to grow professionally. To be successful, the teacher and the paraeducator must view themselves as a team and partners in the educational process. Input from all team members needs to be solicited. Questions need to be asked and answered. Ideas need to be shared. Teamwork doesn't happen by accident. It requires effort and commitment, a willingness to accept the challenges of working together. Teachers and paraeducators need to form a "relationship" that is built on good communication and mutual respect.

Team effectiveness can be achieved by sharing expectations with one another, by allowing the paraeducator to participate in the planning process, by appreciating each other's unique personality traits, by respecting diversity, and by demonstrating a positive attitude toward teamwork. Once a team works well together, the job is less stressful, more enjoyable, and more rewarding for all team members.

Characteristics of New Paraeducator and Team Teams

According to a review of research on team effectiveness done by Abelson and Woodman (1983), a team that has just formed usually has some or all of the following characteristics:

1. There is considerable confusion as to roles that team members must assume.
2. There is confusion as to the social and professional relationships among members of the team.
3. Individuals have some assets or competencies relative to the team's purpose. However, some people may be unaware of how their skills or knowledge relate to team goals. Perhaps more importantly, some individuals may be unaware of (or may not value) the strengths and competencies of others, or may not appreciate their relationship to team goals.
4. While there may be some understanding of short-range goals (e.g., why the team was brought together), understanding of long-range goals is likely to be more elusive.
5. In the absence of established norms, rules or policy, there is considerable confusion about how the team will operate, how decisions will be made, and so on.
6. Team members (and particularly leaders) do not pay much early attention to social and professional relationships, being more likely to focus initially on the task.

These characteristics are important for us to consider when focusing on the teacher-paraeducator team.

If a team is to be effective, the team must agree on the team's purpose. Members must see the benefits of working together. The mission and goals of the team must be developed with input from all team members. Roles and responsibilities of both the teacher and paraeducator must be clearly defined. Clear expectations are given by the supervising teacher in order to get the job done. Information is shared in a timely manner, and the time the team meets together is effective and productive.

Teaming depends on effective communication. Effective communication expresses a team member's beliefs, ideas, needs, or feelings. For effective team performance, "communication" must facilitate the free flow or exchange of ideas, information and instruction that contribute to common understanding.

When ideas are shared, there is opportunity for evaluation and input that can build even better ideas. From each new experience, more ideas can be developed and tried. Successful communication results in a mutual understanding of what was sent and what was heard.

Trust in Teacher/Paraeducator Teams is Essential for Team Success

Open communication, mutual respect, recognition, and above all, trust form the bond of a healthy team. Trust is built in teams by promoting open communications, providing fair leadership and supervising with sensitivity. (Pickett, A., Gerlach, K., 2003)

Building trust is essential and not always easy. Trust is necessary to have a productive working environment. It is essential for all team members to practice open, honest communication in order to increase awareness and build cooperation. This environment of trust promotes loyalty and commitment to achieve the goals and objectives of the team.

All team members need to develop listening skills so that they can obtain sufficient and accurate information necessary for an effective working relationship. Because many paraeducators have received limited training or orientation for their job, it is especially important that the teacher accurately and clearly describe the goals and needs of the learner being served. Team members must have effective listening techniques in order to promote the essential understanding required for successful intervention.

Effective Teams are Goal Focused

The best teams are also clear on their goals and how each person contributes to reaching them. Clear role clarification is a major part of the success of the team.

Successful teams have a clear understanding of their goals. The elements of a goal include (a) what is to be achieved, (b) a measure of accomplishment – *how will we know when the outcome has been reached?* And, (c) the time factor – *when precisely do we want to have the goal completed?* All team members must agree on the goals of their efforts. These efforts would also include supporting one another.

By focusing on goals, priorities can be established much more easily. Together, the teacher and other professional practitioners and the paraeducator determine what needs to be done, by whom, and by what deadline.

As noted previously, both school professionals and paraeducators need to be aware and understand their roles in getting tasks done and teachers need to know how to use the skills and expertise of each member most effectively. Several factors need to be considered in determining the roles and responsibilities of team members. They include experience, training, comfort level, time constraints, and knowledge levels of individual team members. In determining roles for the paraeducator team, professional and ethical considerations are important considerations.

Leadership is a critical factor for team success. The leader is always the teacher or another school professional who has been designated as the paraeducator's supervisor. The supervisor's role is similar to that of a coach. It involves assessing the paraeducator's skills and helping the paraeducator use them to the fullest. Paraeducators contribute more effectively when they are "coached" and encouraged to make optimal use of their strengths and resources. A supervisor provides direction and ideas, helps identify alternatives, raises questions, and supplies feedback.

The Supervisor as Mentor

The teacher who mentors a paraeducator shares invaluable knowledge and skills with them. Mentoring is a process whereby teacher and paraeducator work together to discover and develop the paraeducator's abilities to provide the paraeducator with knowledge and skills as opportunities and needs arise.

The teacher as a supervisor, mentor, and team leader should:

- Set expectations of the paraeducators performance
- Offer challenging plans and ideas
- Help build self-confidence of the paraeducator
- Encourage ethical and professional behavior
- Offer support
- Actively listen
- Lead and teach by example
- Provide growth experience
- Ask questions and give explanations
- Coach the paraeducator
- Encourage the paraeducator
- Inspire the paraeducator
- Share critical knowledge
- Assist, observe, and demonstrate effective instructional practice
- Direct and delegate effectively
- Give clear, concise directions

PLANNING AND WORKING TOGETHER

Basic Strategies for Clear Communication Between Teacher and Paraeducator

There are a number of elements that must be present in any situation to insure clear channels of communication. Some are commonplace and generally well known. Others are things we take for granted and if the members of the team are not careful and do not pay attention; positive communication can be inhibited. For example:

- The attitude and feelings of both the teacher and paraeducator need to be known, respected, and understood. Teachers and paraeducators need to deal openly with their attitudes and feelings toward their roles and duties, their attitudes toward the students they work with, their attitudes toward instructional styles and management and their attitudes toward the value of the other person's contributions. When feelings are not shared and openly communicated the nature of the relationship will not grow and the team will not be effective.
- An understanding of the similarities and differences between the people involved in the team must be recognized and understood ranging from different points of view about educational strategies to different values, different cultural and religious heritage, different levels of education and experience and other factors that affect the working relationship.
- The teacher and paraeducator should actively seek to develop and share a common vocabulary and system of non-verbal cues.
- The teacher must make sure that directions and expectations are clearly understood and that the paraeducator is able to perform the assigned task prior to implementing the activity in the classroom.
- The paraeducator must be willing to ask for clarification or assistance if the assignment is not understood.
- The teacher should determine what special interests, strengths, and training the paraeducator has that will complement and enhance his/her own skills and improve the delivery of instructional programs to students.
- The team must actively work to create a climate of cooperation, trust, respect, and loyalty by meeting regularly to discuss procedures and techniques that will establish and maintain open channels of communication.

Adapted from Pickett, A.L. (1986), A Training Program to Prepare Teachers to Supervise and Work More Effectively with Paraprofessional Personnel, New York: Center for Advanced Study in Education, City University of New York.

Discussion Activity: Defining Paraeducator

“Para” means “alongside of”

Define the term paraeducator?

Share your definition with other participants. How are they the same? How are they different?

What are the most important words that must be included in a definition?

List other titles used by school districts.

Which titles are most appropriate for this role? Why?

Definitions of a Paraeducator

Paraeducators are school employees who assist and support teacher directed instruction. (Gerlach, 2003)

Paraeducators are school/agency employees who work under the supervision of teachers or other professional practitioners who are responsible for the design, implementation, and assessment of learner progress, and the evaluation of the effectiveness of learning programs and related services for children and youth and/or their families (Pickett 1989). Also, positions are either instructional in nature or who provide other direct services to children and youth and/or families.

The **paraprofessional** is an employee who, following appropriate training performs tasks as prescribed and supervised by the licensed/certified professional/practitioner. Paraprofessionals perform specific duties as directed by the licensed/certified professional/practitioner. The licensed/certified professional/practitioner maintains responsibility for assessing the learner and family needs, and for planning, evaluating, and modifying programs. (IDEA Partnerships Paraprofessional Initiative Report to U.S. Dept. of Education, Office of Special Programs [OSEP], December 2001.)

Paraeducators provide services, under supervision, in the following programmatic areas:

- | | |
|---|---|
| ... Educational programs, including behavior programs | ... Physical therapy |
| ... Occupational therapy | ... Speech and language therapy |
| ... Early intervention and pre-school programs | ... Recreation programs |
| ... Social work/case management | ... Parent training/child find programs |
| ... Vocational training programs and job coaching | ... Playground, lunchroom, library |
| ... Computer assistance | ... Health assistance |
| ... One-to-one instruction (Interpreters, etc.) | |

Can you think of others?

Other Terms Used by School Districts

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| ... paraprofessional | ... inclusion assistant |
| ... parapro | ... one to one assistant |
| ... instructional aide | ... one to one aide |
| ... instructional assistant | ... support aide |
| ... educational aide (E.A.) | ... support assistant |
| ... educational assistant (E.A.) | ... facilitator |
| ... teachers aide (T.A.) | ... behavioral assistant |
| ... teachers assistant (T.A.) | ... classified |
| ... helping assistant | ... non-certs |
| ... education technician | ... para's |

DISCUSSION ACTIVITY: PARAEDUCATORS, WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THEM?

1. Think about the paraeducators you work with. What are their educational backgrounds? What other characteristics describe of them?
2. What contributions do the paraeducators you know make to the education of students?
3. How do paraeducators assist teachers with instruction in educational settings?

DISCUSSION ACTIVITY: CHANGING ROLES

Discuss the changing roles of paraeducators. How and why do you think the role changed in the past 10 years?

Discuss the changing role of teachers. How do you think the role of teachers has changed in the past ten years?

How has the role of the school principal changed?

What do these changes mean for staff development?

What do these changes mean for supervision?

DISCUSSION ACTIVITY: ISSUES

List some current issues that are presently affecting employment, training, and the role of paraeducators.

List some of the current issues that are presently affecting the supervision of paraeducators.

How has the Federal legislation (IDEA 2004 and NCLB) affected paraeducators and those who supervise them?

DISCUSSION ACTIVITY: BELIEFS

List all your beliefs (guiding principles) concerning the employment, preparation, training, and supervision of paraeducators. After you have written your beliefs, write the implications of these statements.

Example: Paraeducators should receive appropriate supervision to carry out their responsibilities.

Implications: Teachers must be trained to direct and manage their work.

**EXPERIENCE IS A
HARD TEACHER
SHE GIVES THE
TEST FIRST, THE
LESSONS
AFTERWARDS.**

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR PARAEDUCATOR EMPLOYMENT, ROLES, PREPARATION AND SUPERVISION

These guiding principles have four primary goals. The first addresses the policy and administrative issues that impact on paraeducator roles, supervision, and preparation. The second provides a foundation that enables schools and other provider agencies to prepare and retain a skilled, committed paraeducator workforce. The third enhances the status and recognition of paraeducators as key members of education and related service teams. The fourth assures that paraeducators are appropriately integrated into program implementation teams through effective supervision.

Guiding Principle 1: Skilled paraeducators are employed to improve the quality of education and services in other provider systems and to help ensure supportive, inclusive, safe, and healthy learning environments for children, youth, and staff.

Guiding Principle 2: Administrators and teachers/providers create environments that recognize paraeducators as valued team members and effectively integrate them into teams.

Guiding Principle 3: Members of all program planning and implementation teams participate within clearly defined roles in changing, dynamic environments to provide learner-centered and individualized experiences and services for all children and youth and their families.

Guiding Principle 4: Paraeducators are respected and supported in their team roles by policymakers, administrators, teachers/providers, and families.

Guiding Principle 5: Standards for paraeducator roles and professional development assure that they are assigned to positions for which they are qualified and have the skills required to assist teachers/providers to provide quality learning experiences and related services for all children and youth and their families.

Guiding Principle 6: Paraeducators receive pre- and in-service professional development provided by the district/agency and opportunities for continuing education or career advancement offered by institutions of higher education.

Guiding Principle 7: Teachers/providers responsible for supervising the work of paraeducators have the skills necessary to plan for, direct, provide on-the-job training for, monitor, and evaluate the performance of paraeducators.

Guiding Principle 8: Paraeducators have an occupational/professional identity and contribute to learner-centered activities that help to achieve the mission of the school/agency.

*These guiding principles are based on research activities conducted by the National Resource Center for Paraprofessionals and paraeducator development efforts in Utah, Minnesota, Iowa, Washington, and Rhode Island.

Discussion Activity:

Discuss each guiding principle. Give examples of how these could be implemented. How could these goals and principles be achieved?

ISSUES AFFECTING THE EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING, SUPERVISION, AND JOB SATISFACTION OF PARAEDUCATORS

Paraeducators and their supervisors in previous training workshops identified the following by research in the field (Hilton, A., Gerlach, K., 1997, in their article entitled, Employment, Preparation, and Management of Paraeducators: Challenges to Appropriate Services for Students with Disabilities, Education and Training in Mental Disabilities, Council for Exceptional Children, pp 71-76).

Role Definition

Problem. There has, for some time, been a lack of clarity regarding ethical roles and responsibilities of paraeducators and those who supervise them. State/Provincial agencies have not developed and/or required local agencies to clearly define the role of the paraeducator and the role of the supervisor in the instructional process.

Discussion:

Develop and Disseminate Strategies

Problem. Currently there have been a limited number of strategies developed from research or practice for the effective use and employment of paraeducators. Effective practices that do exist need to be validated, consolidated, and disseminated to the field.

Discussion:

Legal and Ethical

Problem. Many state and local agencies do not have policy, laws, regulations, standards, or guidelines that prevent paraeducators from being used inappropriately and that in turn can cause students to fail to receive the appropriate education and/or health and safety needs they are entitled. Further, few states or provinces have a licensing or credentialing system that would provide standards for and require training of paraeducators.

Discussion:

Job Descriptions

Problem. Local agencies and individual schools have failed to develop job descriptions that are clear and definitive concerning the roles and responsibilities of paraeducators.

Discussion:

Opportunities of Training and Development of Paraeducators

Problem. Currently training for paraeducators, if available, is often not competency-based and is rarely part of a comprehensive system of career development. Further, paraeducators are seldom provided with opportunities for career advancement or staff development opportunities. As a result, incentives for professional development are minimal.

Discussion:

Preparation of Professionals

Problem. Teachers and administrators are often not prepared for the responsibilities of supervising, mentoring, training, and evaluating.

Discussion:

Communication Time

Problem. There is little time for the team to communicate and plan together. Some paraeducators report that they work the same hours as the students, which does not allow time to communicate with their supervisors.

Discussion:

Job Security, Salary, and Recognition

Problem. Many paraeducators report little job security, low wages, and few benefits. Paraeducators report they are the last to receive recognition for their efforts.

Discussion:

Supervision and Evaluation

Problem. Paraeducators report that supervision is often lacking. Many report they do not receive direction or plans from their supervisors. Many districts do not have a formal evaluation form. Paraeducators report that they appreciate feedback.

Discussion:

State and Local Policies and Guidelines

Problem. Few State and local policies or guidelines exist regarding the role of the paraeducator and their supervision. Many paraeducators have reported that they would appreciate a handbook or written guidelines, policies and regulations.

Discussion:

Hilton, A., Gerlach, K., (1997) Employment, Preparation and Management of Paraeducators: Challenges to Appropriate Service for Students With Disabilities, Education and Training in Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, Council for Exceptional Children, pp 71-76.

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT

Qualifications of Paraprofessionals

NCLB (No Child Left Behind Act) requires that each state receiving funds under Title I, Part A, develop a plan to ensure all new paraprofessionals hired after January 8, 2002, and working in a program supported with Title I funds have met one of the following requirements:

Completed at least two years of postsecondary study; OR

Obtained an associate's (or higher) degree; OR

Met a rigorous "standard of quality" and can demonstrate knowledge of and the ability to assist in instructing reading, writing, and mathematics by passing a formal state or local academic assessment. (The term "standard of quality" is not defined in the law. Although the implication is that this standard is to be established by the state, rulemaking may further clarify this provision.)

Current paraprofessionals must have met one of the above requirements no later than the end of the school year 2006. In addition, all paraprofessionals working in Title I-supported schools, regardless of hiring date, must have earned a high school diploma or its equivalent.

Qualifications of Paraprofessionals

The following is cited in NCLB as appropriate roles for paraprofessionals --

- Providing one-on-one tutoring for eligible students;
- Assisting with classroom management (such as organizing instructional and other materials);
- Providing assistance in a computer laboratory;
- Conducting parental involvement activities;
- Providing support in a library or media center;
- Acting as a translator; and
- Providing, under the direct supervision of a teacher, instructional services.

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2004

Important Issues for Paraprofessionals – Please note: special education paraprofessionals who provide instructional support in Title I school wide programs STILL must meet the NCLB requirements. This has been the case since NCLB was passed in 2001.

PART B - ASSISTANCE FOR EDUCATION OF ALL CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Section 612 State Eligibility

(a) IN GENERAL – A State is eligible for assistance under this part for a fiscal year if the State submits a plan that provides assurances to the Secretary that the State has in effect policies and procedures to ensure that the State meets each of the following conditions:

(14) PERSONNEL QUALIFICATIONS

(A) IN GENERAL – The State educational agency has established and maintains qualifications to ensure that personnel necessary to carry out this part are appropriately and adequately prepared and trained, including that those personnel have the content knowledge and skills to serve children with disabilities.

(B) RELATED SERVICES PERSONNEL AND PARAPROFESSIONALS – The qualifications under subparagraph (A) include qualifications for related services personnel and paraprofessionals that –

- (i) are consistent with any State-approved or State-recognized certification, licensing, registration, or other comparable requirements that apply to the professional discipline in which those personnel are providing special education or related services;
- (ii) ensure that related services personnel who deliver services in their discipline or profession meet the requirements of clause (i) and have not had certification or licensure requirements waived on an emergency, temporary, or provisional basis; and,
- (iii) Allow paraprofessionals and assistants who are appropriately trained and supervised, in accordance with State law, regulation, or written policy, in meeting the requirements of this part to be used to assist in the provision of special education and related services under this part to children with disabilities.

(C) POLICY – In implementing this section, a State shall adopt a policy that includes a requirement that local educational agencies in the State take measurable steps to recruit, hire, train, and retain highly qualified personnel to provide special education and related services under this part to children with disabilities.

Section 613 Local Educational Agency Eligibility

(a) IN GENERAL – A local educational agency is eligible for assistance under this part for a fiscal year if such agency submits a plan that provides assurances to the State educational agency that the local educational agency meets each of the following conditions:

(3) PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT – The local educational agency shall ensure that all personnel necessary to carry out this part are appropriately and adequately prepared, subject to the requirements of section 612(a) (14) and section 2122 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

PART D – NATIONAL ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Subpart 1 – State Personnel Development Grants

Section 651 Purpose; Definition of Personnel; Program Authority

(a) PURPOSE – The purpose of this subpart is to assist State educational agencies in reforming and improving their systems for personnel preparation and professional development in early intervention, educational, and transition services in order to improve results for children with disabilities.

(b) DEFINITION OF PERSONNEL – In this subpart the term ‘personnel’ means special education teachers, regular education teachers, principals, administrators, related services personnel, paraprofessionals, and early intervention personnel serving infants, toddlers, pre-schoolers, or children with disabilities, except where a particular category of personnel, such as related services personnel, is identified.

Section 654 Use of Funds

(a) PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES – A State educational agency that receives a grant under this subpart shall use the grant funds to support activities in accordance with the State's plan described in section 653, including 1 or more of the following:

- (A) Providing professional development activities that –
- (B) Improve the knowledge of special education and regular education teachers and principals and, in appropriate cases, **paraprofessionals**, concerning effective instructional practices, and that –
 - (i) provide training in how to teach and address the needs of children with different learning styles and children who are limited English proficient;
 - (ii) involve collaborative groups of teachers, administrators, and in appropriate cases, related services personnel;
 - (iii) provide training in methods of --
 - (I) positive behavioral interventions and supports to improve student behavior in the classroom;
 - (II) scientifically based reading instruction, including early literacy instruction;
 - (III) early and appropriate interventions to identify and help children with disabilities;
 - (IV) effective instruction for children with low incidence disabilities;
 - (V) successful transitioning to postsecondary opportunities; and
 - (VI) using classroom-based techniques to assist children prior to referral for special education;
 - (iv) provide training to enable personnel to work with and involve parents in their child's education, including parents of low income and limited English proficient children with disabilities;
 - (v) provide training for special education personnel and regular education personnel in planning, developing, and implementing effective and appropriate IEPs; and
 - (vi) provide training to meet the needs for students with significant health, mobility, or behavioral needs prior to serving such students;
- (C) train administrators, principals, and other relevant school personnel in conducting effective IEP meetings; and,
- (D) train early intervention, preschool, and related services providers, and other relevant school personnel, in conducting effective individualized family service plan (IFSP) meetings.

(5) Carrying out programs and activities that are designed to improve the quality of personnel who serve children with disabilities, such as –

- (A) innovative professional development programs (which may be provided through partnerships that include institutions of higher education), including programs that train teachers and principals to integrate technology into curricula and instruction to improve teaching, learning, and technology literacy, which professional development shall be consistent with the definition of professional development in section 9101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965; and
- (B) the development and use of proven, cost effective strategies for the implementation of professional development activities, such as through the use of technology and distance learning.

(6) Carrying out programs and activities that are designed to improve the quality of early intervention personnel, including **paraprofessionals** and primary referral sources, such as –

- (A) professional development programs to improve the delivery of early intervention services;
- (B) initiatives to promote the recruitment and retention of early intervention personnel; and
- (C) interagency activities to ensure that early intervention personnel are adequately prepared and trained.

(b) OTHER ACTIVITIES – A State educational agency that receives a grant under this subpart shall use the grant funds to support activities in accordance with the State's plan described in section 653, including 1 or more of the following:

- (2) Programs that establish, expand, or improve alternative routes for State certification of special education teachers for highly qualified individuals with a baccalaureate or master's degree, including mid-career professionals from other occupations, **paraprofessionals**, and recent college or university graduates with records of academic distinction who demonstrate the potential to become highly effective special education teachers.

QUALITY INDICATORS

Quality Indicators for States and Local Districts who are interested in assessing their personnel development systems relative to the inclusion of paraprofessionals and assistants:

Definitions and Demographics

Does your State have an updated definition of paraprofessional and/or paraeducator? How many paraprofessionals are in the State? Identify by type, discipline, and location.

Roles and Responsibilities

How are paraprofessionals currently utilized in your State? What programs are they assigned to? What are their responsibilities? Who supervises them?

Are roles for paraprofessionals and assistants clearly defined as supervised providers of direct services to children, youth, and their families?

Are distinctions between professional and paraprofessional roles clearly identified?

Does the language demonstrate a respect for paraprofessional positions and, therefore the individuals who fill them (e.g., uses the term "paraprofessional" rather than the shortened term "para")?

Supervision

Who is responsible for setting standards for supervision for paraprofessionals and assistants? Who has primary responsibility for supervision in situations where there are multiple lines of supervision? Are these standards tied to (integrated into) the State's teacher/provider preparation or teacher/provider certification/licensure systems?

Is sufficient time and opportunity provided for orientation, and ongoing meetings and supervisory responsibilities?

Are teacher preparation programs revising their course content to include supervisory responsibility for paraprofessionals? How does this supervisory responsibility compare with other disciplines?

Training

Have knowledge and skills required by paraeducators and assistants to work in different position levels, programs, and across disciplines been identified and developed?

Are there systematic competency-based opportunities for personnel development and career advancement?

- For paraprofessionals
- For administrators who manage paraprofessionals
- For educators and other professionals who supervise paraprofessionals

Does the training provide paraprofessionals and their supervisors with an understanding of the roles of professionals as team leaders, diagnosticians, program planners and supervisors of paraprofessionals?

Does the content demonstrate respect for children and youth with disabilities and their families, as well as for those who come from diverse ethnic, cultural and language backgrounds?

Does the training material include information on the ethical, legal, and team-based roles of professionals and paraprofessionals in the delivery of education and related services?

Are licensed/certified professionals/practitioners involved in the training that have knowledge of and respect for professional and paraprofessional roles?

Is sufficient time and opportunity provided for orientation, initial training, and continued competency development?

How can different constituencies (e.g., professional associations, provider agencies, IHEs) contribute to the efforts to improve teacher/provider-paraprofessional teams?

Credentialing

Is there a statewide credentialing system or mechanism for assuring that paraeducators and assistants have the skills they require? What type of program is it? At what level is it administered? Who administers it (i.e., State, local district, professional association)?

Government and Stakeholder Policies and Practices

What is the impact of federal mandates and funding, State reimbursements policies, and regulatory procedures, or local collective bargaining agreements on the employment, training, and supervision of paraprofessionals and assistants?

What are the current roles for the various State agencies relative to establishing standards, credentialing systems, and supervisory responsibility for paraprofessionals and assistants in (and across) early childhood (including Head Start, child care, and early intervention/IDEA Part C), general and special education, ESL, and bilingual/multilingual education, and related services?

What are the roles of 2- and 4-year IHEs, professional organizations and unions in setting and implementing standards for paraprofessional utilization, personnel development, credentialing, and supervision?

What are the roles for State agencies, LEA, and other provider agencies for assuring that standards and other requirements are effectively implemented?

In your State, how are local districts and provider agencies addressing the following issues?

- Developing job descriptions for paraprofessional and assistant level positions?
- Determining placement of and delegation of responsibilities to paraeducators and assistants based on skill level, expectations of the job, and requirements of the position?
- Developing indicators for assessing the on-the-job performance of paraeducators and assistants?
- Providing standardized systematic opportunities for personnel development for paraeducators and assistants?
- Ensuring that teachers and providers are prepared for their roles as supervisors of paraeducators and assistants?

What administrative, political, and fiscal barriers exist in your State or local districts to the development of systems and standards to improve the performance of supervision and preparation of paraprofessionals?

What resources and supports are available to facilitate the development and implementation of standards and systems for paraeducators and assistants?

What can SEAs and other State agencies do to develop and strengthen partnerships among the different constituencies?

**COMMUNICATION
IS LIKE A PHONE
NUMBER**

**YOU NEED ALL
THE DIGITS TO
GET THROUGH**

ETHICAL ISSUES: PARENTS RIGHT TO KNOW

What does a family need to know when a paraeducator assists with instruction?

Another issue concerns family involvement in planning paraeducator services to implement the IEP (Individual Education Program). Family members should be active participants in considering the need for paraeducator services in an IEP. If a student requires the services of a paraeducator to assist with the implementation of the IEP, family members need to contribute to the decision making and planning about how those services will be delivered. The Iowa Department of Education Division of Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education, (1998), suggests the following questions be asked:

1. What issues do family members and other IEP team members need to address when considering the needs of the student?
2. What accommodations or modifications are needed and who will provide those accommodations?
3. What services will be provided by the paraeducator?
4. Where will the services be provided?
5. How much time will the paraeducator be working with the learner?
6. How long will services are needed?
7. How will we know when the learner outcomes/objectives have been achieved?
8. Who is responsible for directing and monitoring the paraeducator?
9. Who should I call about programming issues such as my child's progress, class scheduling, instructional needs, or social interaction with peers?
10. What skills does the paraeducator need to work effectively with my child? How will the paraeducator be trained prior to starting services? What ongoing staff development will be provided to the paraeducator?
11. How will information the paraeducator has about my child's experiences at school be shared with me?

From: Heller, B , Gerlach, K. (2003), Paraeducators in Education settings: Ethical Issues, in Pickett, A.L.& Gerlach, K., Paraeducators in Education Settings a Team Approach, Austin, TX: Pro-Ed.



The Roles of Supervising Teachers

It is not possible to identify the roles of paraeducators or specify appropriate duties and tasks for them without first discussing the roles and responsibilities of teachers and other professional practitioners in classrooms and other education settings.

While teachers and paraeducators perform some tasks that overlap, especially in the area of technical skills (e.g., gathering data about student performance, maintaining records, providing direct instruction, implementing behavior management and disciplinary programs, and more), it is teachers or other professional staff members who are responsible for evaluating data, diagnosing needs of individual and groups of students and prescribing the programs to meet the modified needs. Teachers are also responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of instructional methods and assessing the impact of the program on student progress and performance.

It is teachers who are responsible for planning, scheduling and directing the work of paraeducators and other support personnel such as volunteers and peer tutors. In sum, teachers have become managers of both the education process and human resources who serve as facilitators of student programs and learning.

--Anna Lou Pickett, Director

National Resource Center for Paraprofessionals in Education and Related Services, New York, NY

Supervision of Paraeducators

NCLB, 2002 -What does NCLB say?

A paraprofessional works under the direct supervision of a teacher if the teacher plans the paraprofessional's instructional activities and evaluates the achievement of the students with whom the paraprofessional works. The paraprofessional also would be required to work in close proximity of the teacher

Some Supervision Issues

- ✓ There is a difference between the person responsible for hiring and evaluating performance (an administrator), and the person directing day-to-day work with students (an educator or other licensed person).
- ✓ Teachers must learn strategies for supervising paraeducators -- beginning in their teacher preparation programs. In addition, administrators must promote effective instructional supervisory relationships and create infrastructures that reward teams.
- ✓ Six major themes associated with respect, appreciation, and acknowledgement of paraeducators (Giangreco, Edelman, & Broer, 2001) Non-monetary signs and symbols of appreciation
 - Compensation
 - Being entrusted with important responsibilities
 - Non-instructional responsibilities
 - Being listened to
 - Orientation and support
- ✓ Some studies have found that paraeducators report being "responsible" for the instructional program of a student when that is the responsibility of the teacher (Giangreco, Edelman, Luiselli, & MacFarland, 1997; Marks, Schrader, & Leving, 1999; Wallace, Stahl, & MacMillan, 2000).
- ✓ Paraeducators reported a high level of responsibility in their jobs, such as: decisions regarding adaptations, behavioral support, and interacting with team members including parents (Downing, Ryndak, & Clark 2000).

DISCUSSION ACTIVITY: SUPERVISORY ROLES

Define the term “supervisor.”

Define the term “mentor.”

In order for a teacher to supervise a paraeducator, several skills are necessary. What are the most important skills necessary to direct and manage the work of the paraeducator?

What should a paraeducator expect from a supervising teacher?

What should a supervising teacher expect from a paraeducator?

“A successful team effort is not a mysterious or magical event that just ‘happens’ because fate brought the right group together.

Real Teamwork happens as the result of a deliberate and well thought out plan, executed by a skilled team leader who has a clear vision, specific goals, and a definite strategy to get people to work well together.”

Robert Zenger

DISCUSSION ACTIVITY: SUPERVISORY ROLES

What supervisors expect from paraeducators

1. Have a “good attitude” toward the school and its personnel; like and respect children and have a desire to work with them.
2. Be dependable in promptness and attendance, reliable in job performance and discreet in confidential matters.
3. Be able to assist in the instructional process, and to share perceptions of student’s progress and needs.
4. Be able to perform non-instructional duties such as record keeping, classroom maintenance, preparation of bulletin boards and learning materials.
5. Be able to give help and assistance without being asked.
6. To use good judgment when unusual situations arise.
7. Be a liaison between school and community; interpret community values and concerns to the school and those of the school to the community.
8. Participate in training to develop skills and become a more effective paraeducator.
9. Believe that the paraeducator and teacher should be a working team.

What Paraeducators Expect from Supervisors

1. To accept the value of paraeducators in education for providing instructional assistance as well as community input.
2. Be sensitive to the feelings and needs of children.
3. Provide educational leadership; include me in the planning, give me meaningful assignments and clear directions.
4. Explain the rules for student behavior and provide support when I am working with students.
5. Give me honest feedback and evaluation of my performance in a confidential manner; praise me for what I do well and offer suggestions for improvement.
6. Respect my individuality; recognize and utilize my talents in classroom activities.
7. Accept me as a member of the school staff, both professionally and socially
8. Inform me of training opportunities and encourage me to participate.
9. Believe that the paraeducator and teacher should be a working team.

Discussion Questions

What can you add to these expectations?

DISCUSSION ACTIVITY: FUNCTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH DIRECTING THE WORK OF PARAEDUCATORS

Supervision

Instructional supervision means that teachers and other paraprofessionals engage in many activities that provide direction and guidance to the work of paraeducators. What would be the supervision duties of a teacher who manages or directs the work of a paraeducator?

List some of the responsibilities under each topic that teachers need to provide in order to supervise appropriately.

A. Planning Lessons

B. Delegating

C. On-the-Job Training

D. Monitoring Performance and Giving Feedback

E. Managing the Classroom or Program Environment

Functions Associated with Directing the Work of Paraeducators

A. Planning

- *Set goals for the instructional team*
- *Describe activities and methods*
- *Set expectations for outcomes*
- *Create and coordinate schedules*

B. Delegating

- *Orientation to Program and Learning Environment: Introduce people, policies, procedures, roles and responsibilities*
- *Determine what to delegate*
- *Direct tasks and responsibilities of the paraeducator*
- *Monitor performance*

C. On-the-Job Training

- *Conduct ongoing assessment of skills*
- *Teach, coach, mentor new skills*
- *Give feedback on skill performance*

D. Monitoring Performance

- *Track performance of duties*
- *Provide information about job performance*
- *Assist with staff development goal setting*

E. Managing the Classroom or Program Environment

- *Maintain effective communications*
- *Create an atmosphere of respect and recognition*
- *Facilitate problem solving*
- *Establish team guidelines*

- Adapted from the work of Nancy French, Ph.D., University of Colorado - Denver

Supervisory and Management Tasks Performed by Teachers: A Review

Tasks performed by teachers to effectively integrate paraeducators into the instructional team and supervise their work may include:

- Planning, scheduling and assigning specific duties for paraeducators based on their work experience, level of training and demonstrated competency to perform a task;
- Directing and monitoring the day-to-day work of the paraeducator;
- Delegating appropriate tasks to paraeducators;
- Using effective communication and problem-solving techniques to reduce interpersonal or other problems that may occur in the classroom;
- Providing feedback about the paraeducators on-the-job performance; and
- Planning and providing structured on-the-job coaching based on the identified training needs of the paraeducator

To perform these duties, teachers require knowledge of district policies with regard to employment, roles and responsibilities, placement, evaluation and training of paraeducators.

To perform these duties, teachers require knowledge of district policies with regard to employment, roles and responsibilities, placement, evaluation and training of paraeducators.

Competencies for Individuals Who Supervise Paraprofessionals
Communicating With Paraprofessionals

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Planning and Scheduling

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Instructional Support

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Modeling for Paraprofessionals

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Public Relations

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

**IF YOU ARE NOT
SURE WHERE
YOU ARE GOING**

**HOW DO YOU
TELL SOMEONE
ELSE HOW TO
GET THERE**

- BOB MAGER 1976

COMPETENCIES FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO SUPERVISE PARAPROFESSIONALS

Communicating With Paraprofessionals

1. Communicates with paraprofessionals in a clear, receptive and responsive manner.
2. Provides clear daily direction in coordinating plans, schedules, and tasks.
3. Informs and updates paraprofessionals regarding student information, such as assessment results, behavioral changes, medications, and other factors that may influence the work of the paraprofessional.
4. Provides regular opportunities for staff communication, group discussion, and collaboration.
5. Assists paraprofessionals in clarifying their roles and responsibilities to other staff, parents, or volunteers.

Planning and Scheduling

1. Establishes goals and detailed plans around which activities of paraprofessionals are coordinated.
2. Organizes and manages schedules that allow for cooperation, planning, and information sharing.
3. Considers the strengths, interests, and needs of paraprofessionals when managing schedules.
4. Manages smooth transitions brought on by changes to the daily schedules of paraprofessionals.
5. Organizes and provides materials and resources that are necessary to carry out the objectives of each paraprofessional's activity.

Instructional Support

1. Provides regular, constructive feedback regarding each paraprofessional's work performance.
2. Encourages the involvement of paraprofessionals in setting goals and planning, implementing, and evaluating program and instructional activities.
3. Coordinates collaboration among paraprofessionals and other staff, such as specialists.
4. Efficiently manages resources related to student instruction, such as instructional materials, physical space, and personnel.
5. Supports paraprofessionals in using modified instructional plans and materials to accommodate the exceptional learning needs of various students.
6. Provides assistance and direction for paraprofessionals who work in independent capacities, such as classrooms, job mentoring, community transition support, work-study, transportation, etc.

Modeling for Paraprofessionals

1. Models for paraprofessionals a caring and respectful manner when interacting with students.
2. Models for paraprofessionals a behavior that is trustworthy, cooperative, and active in school-wide programs.
3. Models for paraprofessionals respect, patience, and persistence in carrying out educational objectives.

Public Relations

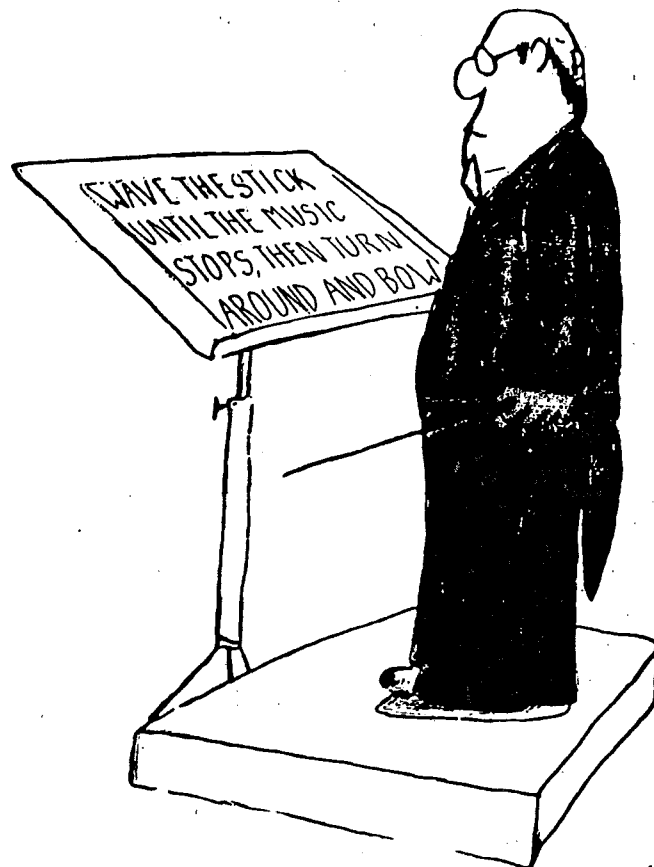
1. Informs administrators, teachers, and parents of the responsibilities and roles paraprofessionals have in the educational program.
2. Advocates for the paraprofessional regarding training and leave time, modifications in responsibility, involvement in decision groups, and other issues of importance to paraprofessionals.

Training

1. Provides opportunities for on-the-job training for paraprofessional skill development.
2. Educates paraprofessionals of their legal rights and responsibilities regarding their student interaction, services, and instructional programming.
3. Advocates for school and district to offer paraprofessionals a basic training in current issues and strategies related to the teaching of students with disabilities.

Management of Paraprofessionals

1. Clearly describes, to each paraprofessional, their roles and responsibilities.
2. Maintains regular positive and supportive interaction with paraprofessionals.
3. Contributes to the evaluation of paraprofessional performance with the intent of assisting paraprofessional skill improvement.
4. Maintains professionalism through respect, confidentiality, and honoring boundaries.
5. Provides beginning and substitute paraprofessional with an orientation that results in sufficient understanding of the setting, staff, students, and staff roles and responsibilities.



SCOPE OF TEACHER/PROVIDER RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PARAEDUCATOR SUPERVISION

Responsibility 1

Teachers/providers are leaders of program implementation teams with supervisor responsibility for paraeducators.

The scope of responsibilities for teachers/providers as team leaders includes:

1. Participating on program planning teams (including families) to develop individualized programs for infants, young children, and school-age learners with disabilities and other special needs.
2. Preparing work assignments for paraeducators based on program needs, learning objectives for children and youth, and paraeducator skills.
3. Involving paraeducators in various components of the learning process to support teacher/provider management and program implementation functions.
4. Providing on-the-job training for and feedback to paraeducators to prepare them to carry out team decisions.
5. Sharing relevant information with principals/agency administrators and paraeducators about the strengths and professional development needs of an individual paraeducators.

Responsibility 2

As team leaders, teachers/providers create and maintain learner-centered, supportive environments.

The scope of responsibilities for teachers/providers in providing supportive learner-centered environments includes:

1. Implementing, with the assistance of paraeducators, district/agency policies and staff procedures for protecting the safety, health, and well-being of learners and staff.
2. Involving families in their child's learning experiences.
3. Involving paraeducators in learning activities that provide supportive/inclusive learning environments that respect differences among children, youth, their families, staff, and protect their human and legal rights.

Responsibility 3

As team leaders, teachers/providers plan and organize learning experiences.

The scope of responsibility for teachers/providers for developing, planning, and organizing learning experiences includes:

1. Utilizing long-term and short-term learning objectives developed by program planning teams (that include families) to plan learning experiences for individual and groups of children and youths.
2. Aligning, in cooperation with other team members, curriculum content with learning and performance standards established by the State.
3. Developing learning and behavioral plans to achieve learning objectives and performance standards.
4. Modifying learning plans, curriculum content and instructional strategies to accommodate differences in individual children and youth.
5. Selecting adaptive equipment, assistive technology, and age/developmentally-appropriate, instructional materials needed to accommodate individual learner differences.
6. Involving paraeducators in planning and organizing learning experiences based on paraeducator qualifications to carry out the tasks.

Responsibility 4

As team leaders, teachers/providers engage children and youth in learning experiences.

The scope of responsibility for teachers/providers for ensuring that children and youth are actively engaged in learning experience includes:

1. Providing, with the assistance of paraeducators, learning experiences for children and youth that take place in different environments (i.e., classrooms, libraries, study halls, playgrounds, worksites, and other community-based locations, and home- and center-based programs serving infants/young children and their families).
2. Preparing work assignments for paraeducators based on learning objectives, learning preferences/styles, and other characteristics of the individuals and/or groups that the paraeducator will assist.
3. Communicating information to paraeducators about how to use the methods, materials, and equipment required to carry out learning activities and how to document a learner's performance.

Responsibility 5

As team leaders, teachers/providers assess learner needs, progress, and achievements.

The scope of responsibility for teachers/providers in the assessment process includes:

1. Participating in assessment activities that involve families in establishing eligibility for special services/programs.
2. Administering and analyzing, with the assistance of other team members, results of standardized (formal) instruments for assessing learner achievement.
3. Development functional (informal) assessment tools to document individual learner and group strengths and learning needs.
4. Analyzing the results of functional (informal) assessment activities.
5. Keeping learner records required by Federal laws, State regulatory procedures, and district/agency policies.
6. Involving paraeducators in assessment and record-keeping activities for which they are prepared.

Responsibility 6

As team members, teachers/providers practice standards of professional and ethical conduct.

The scope of professional and ethical responsibilities for teachers/providers connected with the supervision, evaluation, and preparation of paraeducators includes:

1. Adhering to the ethical and professional standards of conduct related to the supervision and evaluation of paraeducators established by the professional organization representing their discipline and/or the district/agency/state.
2. Modeling standards of professional conduct for paraeducators (i.e., maintaining confidentiality and demonstrating respect for the human, civil, and legal rights of children, youth, and families).
3. Ensuring that paraeducators follow guidelines established by the district/agency to protect the health, safety, and well-being of children and youth.
4. Participating in opportunities for professional development that improve supervisory and team-building skills.

The standards of the knowledge and skills teachers/providers require carry out these responsibilities following on the next pages.

STANDARDS FOR TEACHER/PROVIDER SUPERVISORY COMPETENCIES

Standard 1

To serve as leaders of program implementation teams and to supervise paraeducators, teachers/providers demonstrate the following knowledge and skill competencies.

- I. Knowledge competencies include an:
 - K1 Understanding of the value of a team approach in the delivery of services.
 - K2 Understanding of the distinctions in teacher/provider and administrator roles in the employment, management, supervision, evaluation, and preparation of paraeducators.
 - K3 Understanding of distinctions in the roles and responsibilities of teachers/providers and paraprofessionals.
 - K4 Awareness of the contribution that paraeducators make to increase the availability of individualized learning experiences and services.
 - K5 Awareness of Federal and State laws and regulations and district/agency policies and practices that influence the employment, roles and responsibilities, supervision, and preparation of paraeducators.
 - K6 Understanding of the responsibilities of teachers/providers for supervising paraeducators in program implementation teams.
 - K7 Awareness of district/agency policies that may require paraeducators to participate in program planning teams.
 - K8 Awareness of interactive, problem-solving, and decision-making techniques that build and maintain effective program planning and program implementation teams.
- II. Skill competencies include an:
 - S1 Ability to plan work assignments for paraeducators based on program requirements and learning objectives for individuals and groups.
 - S2 Ability to appropriately delegate tasks to paraeducators based on their qualifications to carry out an assignment.
 - S3 Ability to share information with paraeducators about their roles as members of program planning teams if required by district/agency policies, as well as the roles of other team members including families in the development of learner goals.
 - S4 Ability to monitor the day-to-day performance of paraeducators and to provide principals/agency administrators with relevant information about the strengths and professional development needs of paraeducators.
 - S5 Ability to provide systematic on-the-job training and mentoring to paraeducators.

Standard 2

To ensure that paraeducators contribute to learner-centered, supportive environments, teachers/providers demonstrate the following knowledge and skills.

- I. Knowledge competencies include an:
 - K1 Understanding of the contributions that paraeducators make to serving children and youth in supportive, learner-centered environments.
 - K2 Awareness of district/agency and/or State/local government policies and procedures for reporting suspected physical, sexual, and psychological child abuse.
 - K3 Awareness of effective strategies for involving families in all aspects of their child's learning experiences.
 - K4 Awareness of distinctions in teacher/provider and paraeducator responsibilities for sharing information with families about learner performance, and/or engaging families in their child's learning experiences.

- II. Skill competencies include an:
 - S1 Ability to share and/or reinforce information with paraeducators about Federal, State, and local policies and procedures that ensure the safety, health, and well-being of learners and staff.
 - S2 Ability to plan paraeducator activities that help to maintain supportive learner-centered environments and protect the safety, health, and well-being of children, youth, and staff.
 - S3 Ability to appropriately involve paraeducators in activities that engage families in their child's learning experiences.
 - S4 Ability to model interactive skills that demonstrate respect for the views, rights, and contributions of children and youth, families, and school/agency personnel.

Standard 3

To appropriately involve paraeducators in assisting with planning and organizing learning experiences, teachers/providers demonstrate the following knowledge and skills.

- I. Knowledge competencies include an:
 - K1 Understanding of the distinctions in teacher/provider and paraeducator roles in diagnosing learning needs, modifying activities for individuals, and identifying appropriate materials, equipment, and technology systems.
 - K2 Understanding of how the life experiences of paraeducators who come from diverse cultural, ethnic, and language minority heritages may contribute to planning and organizing learning experiences and environments.
- II. Skill competencies include an:
 - S1 Ability to appropriately involve paraeducators in the planning of individualized learning experiences and organizing environments to promote learning.

Standard 4

To appropriately involve paraeducators in learning experiences, teachers/providers demonstrate the following knowledge and skills.

- I. Knowledge competencies include an:
 - K1 Understanding of differences and similarities in teacher/provider and paraeducator roles and responsibilities in facilitating the learning process.
 - K2 Understanding of how different cultural heritages, ability/developmental levels, and other characteristics of children and youth impact their learning styles/preferences.
 - K3 Awareness of various learning strategies, materials, adaptive equipment, and assistive technologies that are required to meet the needs of individual children and youth.
- II. Skill competencies include an:
 - S1 Ability to share information with paraeducators about characteristics and learning objectives for individual children and youth.
 - S2 Ability to provide on-the-job training to prepare paraeducators to follow learning plans developed by the teacher/provider and to use methods, materials, adaptive equipment, and assistive technology selected or developed by the teacher/provider.

Standard 5

To appropriately involve paraeducators in assessing the strengths and learning needs of children and youth, teachers/providers demonstrate the following knowledge and skills.

- I. Knowledge competencies include an:
 - K1 Awareness of the distinctions among teacher/provider, other licensed district/agency professionals, and paraeducator roles and responsibilities in the assessment process.
 - K2 Understanding of the skills required by paraeducators to objectively gather information and report on the performance and achievements of individual children and youth.
 - K3 Awareness of district/agency policies and procedures for preparing and maintaining all learner records.
- II. Skill competencies include an:

- S1 Ability to appropriately involve paraeducators in administering standardized achievement tests based on State/district/agency policies, the protocol for conducting the tests, and the paraeducators qualifications to carry out the test.
- S2 Ability to provide on-the-job training to prepare paraeducators to use functional (informal) assessment tools and to objectively share relevant information about learner strengths and needs.
- S3 Ability to prepare paraeducators to assist with record-keeping activities based on district/agency policies and procedures.

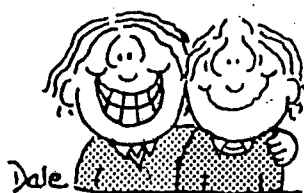
Standard 6

To ensure that professional and ethical standards connected with the supervision of paraeducators are met, teachers/providers demonstrate the following knowledge and skills.

- I. Knowledge competencies include an:
 - K1 Awareness of the human, civil, and legal rights of all children and youth and their families and the responsibility of all district/agency staff for respecting and protecting those rights.
 - K2 Understanding of ethical and professional standards established by the professional organization representing their discipline and/or the State/district/agency for the selection, supervision, assessment, and preparation of paraeducators.
 - K3 Understanding of appropriate roles and responsibilities for paraeducators in the learning process and delivery of other direct services to children, youth, and/or their families.
 - K4 Awareness of resources and opportunities for professional development to improve team leadership and supervisory skills of paraeducators.
- II. Skill competencies include an:
 - S1 Ability to follow standards of professional and ethical conduct for the supervision, assessment, and preparation of paraeducators established by the professional organization representing their discipline and/or the State/district/agency.
 - S2 Ability to model standards of professional and ethical conduct for paraeducators (i.e., maintaining confidentiality, respecting rights of children, youth, and families, and demonstrating
 - S3 Ability to evaluate one's own skills to improve paraeducator supervision.

Responsibilities and Standards adapted from Pickett, A.L., (1999), Strengthening and Supporting Teacher/Provider Paraeducator Teams: Guidelines for Paraeducator Roles, Supervision, and Preparation. National Resource Center for Education and Related Services, Graduate Center, City University of New York.

**We make a great team.
I leave these notes.
You do all the stuff on 'em.**



PARAEDUCATOR SUPERVISION: TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. As team leaders and supervisors of paraeducators, teachers
 - a. Prepare work assignments for paraeducators based on program objectives and learner needs;
 - b. Monitor paraeducator performance;
 - c. Provide on-the-job training to prepare paraeducators to carry out team and learner goals; and
 - d. Share relevant information with principals or agency administrators and paraeducators about the strengths and training needs of the individual paraeducator.
2. As program and classroom managers, teachers create learner-centered environments, and as supervisors of paraeducators, they
 - a. Implement, with the assistance of paraeducators, district and agency procedures for protecting the safety, health, and well-being of learners and staff;
 - b. Involve parents or other caregivers in their child's education; and
 - c. Plan and involve paraeducators in learning activities that maintain supportive, inclusive, and safe learning environments that respect differences among children, youth, families, and staff.
3. As program planners, teachers align curriculum content with learning and performance standards developed by the state or local education agency, they
 - a. Develop lesson and behavioral plan to achieve learning and performance standards;
 - b. Modify plans, curriculum content, and instructional strategies to accommodate individual learner differences; and
 - c. Involve an appropriately prepared paraeducator in planning activities that increase individualized learning opportunities for children and youth based on each individual's qualifications.
4. As instructional facilitators, teachers engage children and youth in learning activities. They
 - a. Provide, with the assistance of paraeducators, learning experiences that take place in different environments (e.g., classrooms, libraries, etc.); and
 - b. Develop paraeducator assignments that include learning objectives for individual children and youth; instructional strategies, materials, and equipment required to carry out the activities; and, methods for documenting learning performance.
5. As diagnosticians of learner needs, teachers
 - a. Participate in assessment activities that involve families in establishing eligibility for special services programs;
 - b. Analyze, with the assistance of other licensed and credentialed professional personnel, results of standardized (formal) instruments for assessing learning achievement;
 - c. Develop and analyze the results of functional (informal) assessment tools to document learner strengths and needs;
 - d. Keep learner records required by federal laws, state regulations, and district or agency policies; and
 - e. Involve paraeducators in assessment and record-keeping activities for which they are prepared.
6. Teachers practice standards of professional and ethical conduct. They
 - a. Adhere to the ethical and professional standards related to the supervision of paraeducators established by the professional organization representing their discipline or field;
 - b. Model standards of professional conduct for paraeducators (i.e., maintaining confidentiality, demonstrating respect for the human, civil, and legal rights of learners and their families, and respecting diversity in learner abilities, heritages, and lifestyles); and

- c. Participate in opportunities for professional development that improve supervisory and team building skills.

Adapted from Strengthening and Supporting Teacher/Provider-Paraeducator Teams: Guidelines for Paraeducator Roles, Supervision, and Preparation, by A.L. Pickett, 1999 - National Resource Center for Paraprofessionals.

DISCUSSION ACTIVITY: ETHICAL ISSUES

1. From an ethical perspective, discuss why teacher supervision is essential for working with paraeducators.
2. What are some important ethical considerations when planning to integrate a paraeducator into a team where he/she will be supervised by a number of teachers?
3. What are the ethical issues involved in scheduling, conferencing, delegation, lesson planning, large group instruction, and training of the paraeducator?
4. What are some of the professional and ethical considerations that should be discussed with paraeducators when they are employed?
5. What are some possible issues connected with the supervision of paraeducators that have professional and ethical implications? Present any you know about and discuss how they might have been resolved or prevented.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF TEACHERS (PARAPROFESSIONAL SUPERVISION)

(Pickett and Safarik, 2003; in Pickett and Gerlach, 2003)

- Participate in supervision training prior to using paraprofessional and upgrade supervision knowledge and skills on a regular basis.
- Participate significantly in the hiring of the paraprofessional for whom he or she will be responsible.
- Inform the family and student about the level (professional vs. paraprofessional), frequency, and duration of services, as well as the extent of supervision.
- Review each individual plan with the paraprofessional at least weekly.
- Delegate specific tasks to the paraprofessional while retaining legal and ethical responsibility for all services provided or omitted.
- Sign all formal documents (e.g., IEPs, reports).
- Review and sign all informal progress notes prepared by the paraprofessional.

Discussion Activity

List the institutional tasks that should only be done by someone with a teaching certificate or license.

List inappropriate roles for a paraeducator.

INAPPROPRIATE ROLES FOR PARAEDUCATORS

Although paraeducators have a more expansive and flexible role than ever before, some activities are considered inappropriate for them. There is considerable agreement that the following roles are not appropriate for a paraeducator. Some states and professional groups determined that paraeducators should not perform the following activities:

1. Assign final grades, fills in report cards
2. Make retention and promotion decisions
3. Administer, score and interpret an assessment instrument that requires subjective judgment (example: essay tests, diagnostic assessments)
4. Assume full responsibility of class for indefinite period of time
5. Make major decisions as to the subject matter to be taught
6. Has the primary responsibility for writing IEP's
7. Teaches academic subject matter to an entire class, without teacher present
8. Substitute for certificated teacher, unless paraeducator is recognized as an official substitute by the state
9. Plan individual daily lessons unless specially trained or program is pre-planned
10. Consult with other therapists or professionals about a student without supervisor's approval
11. Report to parents concerning a child's progress without supervisor's approval
12. Supervise student teachers
13. Attends IEP meeting in place of the teacher
14. Works without supervision
15. Makes programmable decisions without supervisor approval

Discussion:

Can you think of inappropriate roles? Are you in agreement with this list?

Paraprofessional Roles

The following is cited in NCLB as appropriate roles for paraprofessionals –

- Providing one-on-one tutoring for eligible students;
- Assisting with classroom management (such as organizing instructional and other materials);
- Providing assistance in a computer laboratory;
- Conducting parental involvement activities;
- Providing support in a library or media center;
- Acting as a translator; and
- Providing, under the direct supervision of a teacher, instructional services.

Some studies have found that paraeducators report being "responsible" for the instructional program of a student when that is the responsibility of the teacher (Giangreco, Edelman, Luiselli, & MacFarland, 1997; Marks, Schneider, & Leving, 1999; Wallace, Stahl, & MacMillan, 2000).

Paraeducators reported a high level of responsibility in their jobs, such as: decisions regarding adaptations, behavioral support, and interacting with team members including parents (Downing, Ryndak, & Clark, 2000).

DISCUSSION ACTIVITY: TEACHER/PARAEDUCATOR ROLE PERCEPTION ACTIVITY

Directions: Discuss the following tasks. Whose role is this? Place an "X" under teacher or paraeducator. If both perform this role, place an "X" in both boxes. After completing this exercise, circle the numbers of those that are "teacher only."

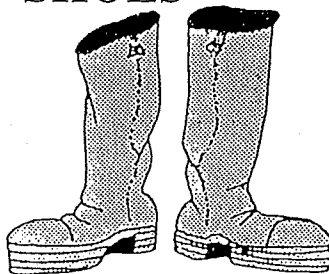
Task	Teacher	Paraeducator
1. Planning daily and weekly schedules		
2. Recording and Charting Data		
3. Administering standardized tests		
4. Scoring standardized tests		
5. Grading tests, papers, and student work		
6. Analyzing and interpreting the results of various assessment activities		
7. Setting goals and objectives for the class and individual students		
8. Writing the lesson plan		
9. Carrying out lesson plans		
10. Introducing new skills/concepts		
11. Modifying/adapting instructional plans and curriculum		
12. Instructing individual or small groups of students		
13. Teaching lessons to entire class		
14. Developing behavior management programs		
15. Disciplining students		
16. Developing instructional materials		
17. Evaluating student performance and progress		
18. Recording attendance and maintaining other records		
19. Setting up and maintaining learning centers/adaptive equipment		
20. Inventorying and ordering supplies		
21. Participating in individualized program planning meetings, parent conferences, and other school-based meetings		
22. Meeting and conferring with parents and families		
23. Consulting with therapists and other professional staff about a student's program and behaviors		
24. Maintaining a clean, safe learning environment		
25. Participation in IEP meetings		

DISCUSSION ACTIVITY: SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Directions: Discuss the following tasks. Whose role is this? Place an "X" under principal or teacher. If both perform this role, place an "X" in both boxes.

Task	Principal	Teacher
1. Provide general orientation related to job responsibilities, routines, assignment hours		
2. School procedures		
3. Develop and revise paraeducator schedules		
4. Identifying and target special programs		
5. Students		
6. Supply access to helpful student information such as IEP goals, modifications, needs, strengths		
7. Clarify job tasks		
8. Approve or develop paraeducator inservice programs and training		
9. Provide ongoing support to paraeducator		
10. Evaluate paraeducator job performance		
11. Provide specific orientation to classroom rules, expectations, procedures, and schedules		
12. Supply information about subject, curriculum, procedures, instructional strategies		
13. Give access to materials		
14. Delegate specific job tasks as related to students and instructional activities		
15. Suggest areas of needed skill development for the paraeducator		
16. Provide on the job skill training		
17. Provide feedback on paraeducator job performance		

**PUT YOURSELF IN
ANOTHER PAIR OF
SHOES**



DISCUSSION ACTIVITY: ROLE DESCRIPTION EXERCISE

Comparison of Teacher and Paraeducator Roles

Read the role description of the supervising teacher then write the job description for the paraeducator.
Use team words in writing the role of the paraeducator.

	Role performed by the supervising teacher	Role performed by the paraeducator
Classroom Organization	Plans weekly schedule Plans lessons/activities for entire class, individual children and paraeducator. Plans room arrangement and learning centers	
Assessment	Assesses individual children Administers tests to entire class	
Setting Objectives	Determines appropriate objectives for class and for individual children	
Teaching	Teaches lessons for the entire class, small groups, and individual children	
Behavior Management	Plans behavior management strategies for entire class and for individual children	
Working with Parents	Meets with parents Initiates conferences with parents concerning child's progress	
Lesson Planning	Plans lessons for students Plans for the paraeducator	
Building Classroom Partnership	Arranges schedule for conferences, shares goals & philosophy with paraeducator, organizes job duties for paraeducator	

Adapted from Gerlach, Kent, Ed.D, Pickett, A.L., (1992) Strengthening the Partnership: Issues, Roles and Responsibilities

Are the team words you used reflected in your district's paraeducator job?

THE CLASSROOM TEACHER'S GUIDE FOR WORKING WITH PARAEDUCATORS

Roles

Special Education Teacher	General Education Teacher	Paraeducator
Case manager Collaborator Consultant Resource teacher	Content specialist Instructional leader	Student supporter Teacher supporter Data collector
<i>This person has:</i> Information about the student's specific needs. Information about the IEP (modifications and instructionally relevant information)	<i>This person has:</i> Information about own teaching styles Information about the class Information about the curriculum	<i>This person has:</i> (the general education teacher must ask the paraeducator)
<i>This person needs:</i> Information about teacher/styles Information about the class Information about the curriculum Communicate student needs Allocate resources Support students Support paraeducators Monitor student programs Provide strategies and interventions Prepare paraeducator	<i>This person needs:</i> Information about the student's specific needs Information from the IEP (modifications and instructionally relevant information) Prepare lessons Plan instructional activities Teach students Develop awareness of special student needs Consult with special service staff Evaluate student progress Support paraeducator	<i>This person needs:</i> (the general education teacher must ask the paraeducator) (must be defined and written depending on student needs)

Before paraeducator classroom duties can actually be defined, paraeducators must be given information from both the general classroom teacher and the special program teacher. One way to use this chart is to ask the paraeducator with whom you work what information he or she already has about the students and about your classroom or subject area. You should then sort out what information the paraeducator still needs to properly support the students.

DISCUSSION ACTIVITY: PLANNING

Planning the Lesson

1. Before a paraeducator is given a lesson plan to follow, what are the most important things the paraeducator would need to know before beginning the lesson? (Example: where materials are kept and how they are used)
2. When someone delegates to you or when someone asks you to do something, what are some things you most appreciate? (Example: clear, concise directions)
3. Design a lesson plan format to be used for paraeducators to follow when working with an individual or group of students.

Sample Lesson or Instructional Plan

Student(s) _____

Class _____

Date _____

Lesson Length (time) _____

Paraeducator _____

Supervisor _____

Objective/Goals:

Description of Activity:

Materials:

Evaluation:

After Lesson:

Note to Supervisor regarding lesson outcomes, etc.

Paraeducator Signature

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Using this lesson plan format, design a lesson plan for a paraeducator for a specific child or small group.

Sample Lesson or Instructional Plan Format

Paraeducator _____
Supervisor _____
Date: _____ Subject _____ Lesson Length _____
Objective _____
Materials Needed _____

Presentation by Paraeducator: (Verbal instructions)	Student Response:

Lesson Closure (review):

Evaluation of Student Progress:

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DISCUSSION ACTIVITY: ADMINISTRATOR ROLES

What are the roles of the school principal or program administrator regarding the employment and supervision of paraeducators?

The Principal's Role

The principal and other school administrators are critical to the success of instructional teams. The principal takes the leadership role in creating a school climate in which paraeducators have a professional identity and contribute to activities that help to enhance student achievement. Even though teachers are responsible for the day-to-day instructional supervision of paraeducators, principals are responsible for the administrative supervision that includes the hiring, preparation, evaluation, and dismissal of paraeducators. The following checklists will serve as a guide for administrators who want to improve the effectiveness of paraeducators and the teachers who direct their work.

The principal and/or other school administrators have the primary responsibility for:

- Recruiting, interviewing, and hiring paraeducators.
- Assigning paraeducators to specific programs, teachers, classrooms, or educational teams.
- Developing appropriate job descriptions.
- Developing appropriate policies for the employment, training, and supervision of paraeducators.
- Evaluating paraeducators and their supervising teachers.
- Promoting effective teamwork in the building and within teacher-paraeducator teams.
- Providing professional development opportunities for paraeducators and those who supervise them.

District-Wide Job Descriptions for Paraeducators

District-level job descriptions should provide the foundation for program and school professional-generated job descriptions. They contain instructional paraeducator roles and responsibilities; define supervisory responsibilities, and experiential/education requirements for different paraeducator positions.

Program Job Descriptions

Job descriptions for specific program areas identify tasks unique to the setting and student needs. Program-specific job descriptions should also address supervisory responsibility, roles, duties, and criteria for formal evaluations.

School Professional-Developed Personalized Job Descriptions

School professionals who supervise paraeducators are responsible for establishing a personalized job description that includes tasks the paraeducator will perform, where they will occur, individual student needs, materials required, and instructional strategies to be used. These job descriptions should be modified as changes occur in student goals and objectives.

Summary

Paraeducator Job Descriptions

The job description should clarify the roles of the paraeducator in the education program. The job description should specifically delineate the paraeducators duties that paraeducators are to perform and the duties the paraeducators are not to perform. Supervision procedures should also appear in the job description.

What Should be Included in a Job Description?

1. The job title should be specific to the job and emphasize the team role.
2. Details of what the paraeducator is expected to do should be delineated.
3. A description of the paraeducators relationship with the student served should be described.
4. Supervision guidelines must be addressed.
5. All necessary personnel (including paraeducators) should be consulted in the development of the job description.

Activity:

Check several district websites for a paraeducator job announcement. (Use the checklist on the following page.

DISCUSSION ACTIVITY: JOB DESCRIPTION ANALYSIS

Instructions: Analyze job descriptions from different districts and programs to determine if they contain the components listed below. Check those items that are included in the job description.

- _____ 1. Are the following subtitles included within the job description?
- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Position title | <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation and supervision |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Position setting | <input type="checkbox"/> Orientation and training |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Qualifications | <input type="checkbox"/> Time/hours |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rationale/purpose for the position | <input type="checkbox"/> Supervisor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Orientation/training requirements | <input type="checkbox"/> Salary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Duties and responsibilities | <input type="checkbox"/> Benefits (optional) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hours of employment | |
- _____ 2. Is the job title appropriate and reflective of current trends in paraeducator employment?
- _____ 3. Does the job description include enough detail about expectations for the position (e.g., what the paraeducator will be doing?)
- _____ 4. Does the job description show a true relationship to what paraeducators are currently doing?
- _____ 5. Are the paraeducators responsibilities to students detailed? Are limits to authority identified?
- _____ 6. How is supervision addressed?
- _____ 7. Does the job description provide direction for the development of paraeducator training programs? Are on-the-job training goals identified?
- _____ 8. Is information included on the methods of evaluation of the paraeducator?

Providing Feedback to the Paraeducator -- Supervisor Checklist

Instructions: This form is to be completed by the supervisor in order to provide feedback after observing the paraeducator conducting an instructional activity.

Date: _____

Activity: _____

Skills	Well Developed	Needs Improvement	Comment
Organizes for the session	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Establishes rapport with student(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Give clear instructions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Uses appropriate questions and cues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Uses materials effectively	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Keeps lesson focused on objective	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Keeps student on task	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Give appropriate feedback to student	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Uses reinforcement effectively	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Records student responses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Follows lesson as planned	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stays on task and uses allotted time effectively	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Note: ALL tasks assigned are under the supervision of a teacher or other licensed or certificated staff.

Sample Paraeducator Feedback Form (checklist)

Paraeducator Name: _____

School Year: _____

Student or Group Observed											
Observation Dates											
Is the Paraeducator teaching the goals and objectives stated in the lesson plan?											
Does the objective relate to the student's IEP goals/ objectives?											
Does the paraeducator show understanding and sensitivity to the student needs?											
Has the Paraeducator assessed the level of difficulty of the lesson and accurately adjusted accordingly?											
Has the student made academic progress since the last observation?											
Does the Paraeducator understand what lesson or task will sequentially lead to reinforcing the IEP's specially designed instruction?											
Lesson Objective Addressed											
Comments:											

Adapted from a similar form used in University Place School District, Washington State
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Supervisor Signature: _____

Paraeducator Feedback and Evaluation Questions for the Supervisor

- ☐ Do I give the paraeducator honest and useful feedback that will help him/her to improve?
- ☐ Do I encourage the paraeducator to share with me his/her observations of student's needs?
- ☐ Do I respect the confidentiality of our exchange of information?
- ☐ Do I help and encourage the paraeducator to participate in training opportunities to improve skills or for personal growth?
- ☐ In addition to providing regular informal evaluation do I set aside time throughout the year for giving the paraeducator formal feedback/or evaluation?
- ☐ Do I give the paraeducator opportunity to evaluate our team relationship and our work with students?
- ☐ When evaluating the paraeducator, do I begin by letting him/her know what I think he/she does well; do I give him/her suggestions for improvement?
- ☐ Do I tell the paraeducator how I appreciate his/her help and compliment him/her on specific things he/she is contributing to the program?
- ☐ Do I inform the paraeducator in advance of scheduled changes that alter activities in which he/she is involved?
- ☐ Do I meet with the paraeducator at a designated time each week?

What are some ways a paraeducator could give feedback to a supervisor?

DISCUSSION ACTIVITY: ORIENTATION

1. What do you think a paraeducator needs to know when they begin their job? --(before they begin working with students)
2. Share how paraeducators might receive this information (orientation, prior training, assessment, handbook, etc.).
3. Develop a checklist of the things the supervisor needs to discuss with a new paraeducator. (Within the first week.) These should be discussed before the paraeducator begins working with children.

Sample Meeting Topics for the Beginning of the School Year

Time:

When will the paraeducator assist the teacher with instruction?

Where will the paraeducator deliver the instruction?

What duration will the paraeducators lessons be?

Roles:

What students will the paraeducator work with?

What will be the format of the lesson plans?

Who will prepare materials?

What should the paraeducator expect from a teacher?

What is the role of the paraeducator?

Management:

When will the paraeducator and teacher plan together?

How will training in the instructional approach or strategies be provided?

How and when will feedback be provided?

What other responsibilities will the paraeducator have and is there time to complete them?

Curriculum and Instruction:

How is the lesson to be taught?

What is the instructional style?

What skills and knowledge are necessary to teach it that way?

How is discipline to be handled?

What is the behavior management strategy to be followed?

What is to be used to provide reinforcement and feedback to the students?

What curriculum materials are to be used?

What data will be collected on student progress and what procedures will be used?

Can you think of other discussion topics?
--

Key Topics That Need to be Discussed with the Paraeducator at the Beginning of the Year

1. Introductions.
2. Orientation to the school or agency's philosophy of education, policies and regulations.
3. Introduction to the teacher's style, pet peeves, classroom philosophy, etc.
4. Introduction to the teacher's short and long range plans for the class.
5. Discussion of the teacher's daily and weekly teaching schedules.
6. Discussion of expected lesson plan format.
7. Discussion of procedural matters (discipline, checking pupil's work, turning in lesson plans, planning future conferences, etc.).
8. Discussion of paraeducators role in the classroom.
9. Clarification of the paraeducators expectations and goals for himself/herself.
10. Discussion of the paraeducators self-concept of strengths and weaknesses pertaining to this and other experiences.
11. Discussion of the kinds of training needed by the paraeducator.
12. Provision for planning a program of early observations, structured support (mentoring), and independent support role activities.
13. Discussion of evaluation criteria that will be used to assess the paraeducators work performance.

Adapted from K. Gerlach, Let's Team Up, 2004

TRAINING AND PREPARATION

“With rare exceptions, policies, standards, and systems for improving the performance and productivity of teacher and paraeducator teams are almost non-existent. Paraeducator training, when it is available is usually highly parochial and sporadic, does not recognize the similarities in the core skills required by the vast majority of paraeducators, nor is it competency based, or linked to systematic opportunities for their career development. State education agencies and/or other state agencies responsible for developing and administering teacher credentialing systems have not joined forces with institutions of high education to establish standards for licensure to ensure that teacher have the knowledge and skills they require to supervise paraeducators. Moreover paraeducator issues have yet to be addressed by various reform initiatives concerned with empowering teachers and increasing the accountability and effectiveness of education systems and practices.”

- Studies have found that paraeducators who report receiving more inservice training or preservice preparation report feeling better prepared to fulfill their job responsibilities
- Numerous recent studies and opinion pieces indicate that there is a scarcity of relevant training available to paraeducators.
- Perceptions regarding training needs differ among administrators, teachers, and paraprofessionals.

Topics listed in the literature for Paraeducator Training –

- Roles, responsibilities and ethical issues
- Positive behavioral supports
- Specifics about disabilities
- Teaching strategies
- Communication, team building, and problem solving strategies
- Transition related information and job coaching
- Early childhood special education and child development
- Special Education Law, confidentiality
- Use of computers and accommodations
- Inclusion
- Health and safety
- Development of independence and mobility
- Observation and data collection strategies

PREPARATION AND TRAINING OF PARAEDUCATORS

Various agencies and organizations with responsibilities for improving the quality of personnel preparation must work together to develop policies and standards for effective staff development. This must be done to assure the availability of a highly skilled workforce. Unless the following questions are asked and answered, ethical dilemmas regarding preparation and training will continue.

1. Have knowledge and skills required by paraeducators and assistants to work in different positions, programs, and across disciplines been identified and developed?
2. Are there systematic competency-based opportunities for personnel development and career advancement?
 - For paraprofessionals
 - For administrators who manage paraprofessionals
 - For educators and other professionals who supervise paraprofessionals
3. Does the training content provide paraeducators and their supervisors with an understanding of the roles of professionals as team leaders, diagnosticians, program planners and supervisors of paraprofessionals?
4. Have the team leadership and supervisory roles been identified and the knowledge and skill competencies developed to prepare the professionals for these roles?
5. Does the training content demonstrate respect for children and youth with disabilities and their families, as well as for those who come from diverse ethnic, cultural and language backgrounds?
6. Does the training content include information on the ethical, legal and team-based roles of professionals and paraeducators in the delivery of education and related services?
7. Do licensed/certified professionals involved in the training of paraeducators have knowledge of and respect for the distinction in professional and paraeducator roles?
8. Is sufficient time and opportunity provided for orientation, initial training, and continued competency development?
9. How can different constituencies (e.g., professional associations, provider agencies, IHEs) contribute to the appropriate efforts to improve the quality of teacher/provider-paraeducator staff development?

From: Heller, B , Gerlach, K. (2003), Paraeducators in Education settings: Ethical Issues, in Pickett, A.L.& Gerlach, K., Paraeducators in Education Settings a Team Approach, Austin, TX: Pro-Ed.

COMPETENCIES & STANDARDS

- a. Training should be aligned with a set of competencies and standards of performance, which are aligned with policies that guide roles & expectations.

Examples -

- CEC's knowledge and skill standards
- Competencies for your state

Training Formats

- b. Specific training formats are best for teaching certain knowledge or skills.

Example -

- An overview of the school-wide behavior plan might take place in a large group, but what that means for an individual student with an IEP might require on-the-job training and modeling by a teacher.

Comprehensive, Relevant to Students

- c. Training should be comprehensive. It should include varied opportunities for paraprofessionals to learn. It should provide examples of how new knowledge/skills apply to kids with specific needs.

Example -

- Training should take into account learning styles by employing a variety of learning activities -- lectures, discussions, group activities, hands on activities, video, demonstrations, more. Also, examples of how the new information or skill might apply to kids with unique learning needs.

Initial Orientation

- d. Initial orientation to program, students, classroom and school must be followed up by targeted training and supervision.

Ongoing Opportunities

- e. Training opportunities should be organized to include ongoing professional development. Training needs can increase over time.

Paraprofessional Skills Inventory - Rating Scale

Paraprofessional Rating

- Unprepared: you are unprepared to do the tasks related to this competency and you need training in order to begin.
- Somewhat prepared: you are doing the tasks related to this competency but need further instruction to be competent.
- Prepared: you are adequately prepared and skilled to do the tasks related to this competency.

Supervision & Performance Assessment

- f. Performance assessment and evaluation should be aligned with role, expectations, & competencies; which guide training.

Career Pathway/Ladder

- g. Training should tie into a career pathway, if possible. The Pathway should be aligned with competencies and create a career ladder for professional growth.

TRAINING AND CURRICULUM MATERIALS ANALYSIS FORM

Curricula					
Consideration	High				low
	5	4	3	2	1
Need ^a					
Consistency ^b					
Integrity ^c					
Relevance ^d					
Depth ^e					
Role legitimacy ^f					
Practicality ^g					
Instructional quality ^h					
Accountability ⁱ					
Cost ^j					

- a. Knowledge, concepts, and skills paraeducators need in a particular assignment
- b. Matches the philosophy and mission of your school or program
- c. Accuracy and honesty
- d. Curriculum addresses skills essential to the paraeducator's assignment
- e. Amount of time and number of activities related to a particular skill or concept
- f. Coverage of concepts, skills related to legitimate roles and responsibilities
- g. The immediate applicability of the skills or concepts
- h. Has specific goals and objectives, instructional materials
- i. Specifies competencies gained by paraeducators and how they are measured
- j. Expense in time, money, human resources, or knowledge necessary to use curriculum

Adapted from *Managing Paraeducators in Your School* by Nancy K. French. 2002, Corwin Press, by permission.

There's more to teaming



Than just hooking things up

DOCUMENTATION OF TRAINING

Discussion Question:

Prioritize training needs of paraeducators in your district.

Discussion Question:

Explain how your district currently keep track of the training a paraeducator receives – OR – if you don't currently have a system, discuss Paraeducator Growth and Development Plan and decide how you will use it to document paraeducator training.

Sample Growth and Development Plan

_____ (Paraeducator Name)				
Competency/Training Areas	Training Activity	Person Responsible	Start	Completion

Sample Paraeducator Training Record Form

Paraeducator Name:		
Home Address:		
Telephone:		
School and Program Assignment:		
Position Title:		
Training Session	Date(s)	Instructor Name

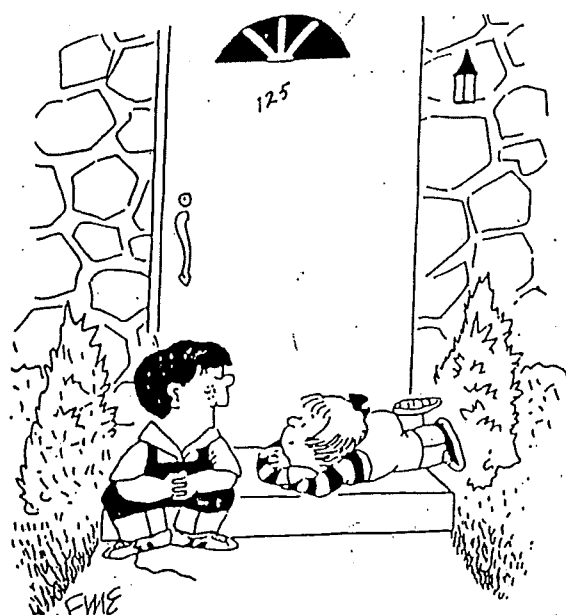
PARAEDUCATOR TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Areas in Which Training is Needed	Now	In the Future
Team Roles		
Team communication		
Roles and responsibilities		
Ethical and legal responsibilities		
Adult communication		
Effective working relationships		
Conflict management		
Problem-solving steps and processes		
Stress management		
Time management		
Instruction		
Following lesson plans		
Implementing curricular adaptations		
Levels of support for students		
Getting the attention of students		
Maintaining active student participation		
Basic mathematical concepts		
Math computation skills		
Using public transportation systems with groups of students		
Math standards		
Creating instructional materials		
Techniques for reading to and with students		
Reading standards at the state and district level		
Written language skills		
Developmental process of written language		
Engaging students in organizing and producing written language		
Written language standards at the state and district level		
Instructional Technology		
Operate audio-visual equipment, copy machines, fax machines, computers		
Augmentative communication systems		
Create low-tech communication devices		
Behavior		
Principles of behavior modification		
Functions of behavior		
Teaching rules, procedures, and routines		
Data recording and reporting		
Principles of communication with students		
Management strategies for minor behavior problems		
Facilitating friendships among students		
Define behavior in terms that students can understand		
Direct instructional methods to teach behavior		
Contingency reinforcement		
Teach rules, routines, and procedures for small or large groups of students		
Behavior management techniques		

Areas in Which Training is Needed	Now	In the Future
Antecedents, behaviors, and consequences		
Logical and natural consequences that are positive and nonaversive		
Redirect, reframe, and reinforce behaviors		
Purposes for data collection		
Use data recording forms		
Duration and frequency data		
Special Education		
Special education laws		
Legal rights of students with disabilities		
How students qualify for special education services and 504 plans		
Steps and processes of special education services		
Values and rationale for inclusion of students with disabilities		
Disability categories		
Needs of students with disabilities		
Assessing information about disabilities, syndromes, and medical conditions on the Internet		
Human Growth and Development		
Concepts of human learning		
Students at risk		
Typical language development		
Health and Safety		
Health, safety, and emergency procedures and practices		
Maintaining physical health and safety of students		
Reporting child abuse, or other illegal or dangerous behavior		
Health-related care in school settings		
Medically fragile children		
Role of the school nurse		
Delegation of health-related procedures and the paraeducator role		
Cultural Diversity		
Identifying culturally based habits and patterns		
Communication characteristics of English speakers and non-English speakers		
Diversity in cultural heritages, life styles, and value systems		
Student Supervision		
Lunchroom safety precautions and first aid specific to choking and aspiration		
Signals for getting students' attention in the lunchroom and playgrounds		
Eating procedures for students with special eating needs		
Natural supports for students with special needs		
Teaching prosocial lunchroom behavior		
Rules and instructional methods for typical playground games		
Safety precautions for children using playground equipment		
Teaching prosocial playground skills		
Principles of playground supervision		
Establish rules, routines, and procedures for bus riding		
Maintain order on the bus		
Emergency safety procedures		
Bus operation procedures		

Areas in Which Training is Needed	Now	In the Future
Mediate conflicts among students on the playground		
Playground peer mediation programs		
Instruction Technology		
Development of communication		
Assertive technology		
Adaptive equipment		
Computer use for instruction		
Transition Programs		
Transitioning students to vocational or career training		
Employment or career-training options and vocational programs		
Career planning		
Marketing and job development		
Job site analysis		
Self-determination for students		
English Language Learners		
Laws and court rules regarding English language learners		
Education services for English language learners		
Working with students who are learning English as a second language		
Programs for English language learners		
Understand how cultural differences affect teaching and learning		
Helping newcomers adjust		
Second language acquisition		
Factors that influence language acquisition in schools		
Instructional methods used in bilingual classes		
When to use the first language and when to use the second language		
Strategies and techniques used in sheltered English instruction		

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"My teacher has a "para" who helps her out. Would you be my "para.?"

DISCUSSION ACTIVITY: DISTRICT HANDBOOK FOR PARAEDUCATORS

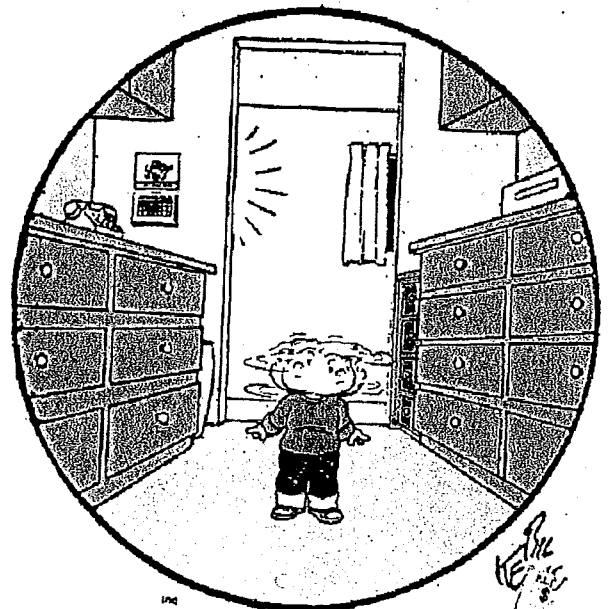
Your task is to develop a District Handbook for paraeducators and a Building or Program Handbook for paraeducators. What do you feel is important to include in each handbook? How would the handbook differ?

District

Building

Classroom or Program

**GIVING DIRECTIONS
BE SPECIFIC !!**



**"It's right there in
the middle drawer."**

PARAEDUCATOR DISTRICT POLICY HANDBOOK OUTLINE

A. Definition of Paraeducator

WAC

State and district policies

Supervisory Guidelines

B. Rationale/need for paraeducators

Purpose of position

Benefits for students

Benefits to school

Benefits for school professionals

C. Requirements for employment

Education (minimum level)

Age (minimum)

Interest in working with students who have different ability levels

Future training requirements

D. Job description

Position title(s) and setting(s)

Duties and responsibilities

Supervision guidelines

Evaluation procedures and criteria

E. Staff development

State and district training policies and standards

Rationale for training

Training goals/competencies

List of training resources (building, district, community colleges)

Types of training: orientation, on-the-job, inservice

F. Benefits/working conditions

Salary

Hours

Absence procedures

Benefits (i.e., sick leave, insurance, personal leave, vacations)

G. Supervision policy

Definition of supervision

Supervision responsibilities (role and responsibilities of school professionals and administrators)

H. Evaluation procedures

School district policy

Person(s) responsible

Frequency of evaluation

Criteria for evaluation

Feedback/reporting guidelines

Appeal/grievance provisions

Dismissal procedures

I. School and emergency procedures

J. Paraeducators professional/ethical responsibilities

Maintaining confidentiality

Relationship to students

Relationship to supervisors, colleagues, and parents

DISCUSSION ACTIVITY: EFFECTIVE TEAMS, AN ASSESSMENT

Circle yes, no, needs improvement to the following questions:

1. We are all in agreement about what we are to do here. Our mission is clear. Goals are established.
Yes No Needs Improvement
2. The team shares a clear vision of what needs to be done to accomplish the goals.
Yes No Needs Improvement
3. Roles and responsibilities of each team member are clearly established.
Yes No Needs Improvement
4. The team leadership role is clear.
Yes No Needs Improvement
5. Team expectations are communicated in a climate of trust and openness.
Yes No Needs Improvement
6. The team knows each person's role in any decisions that have to be made.
Yes No Needs Improvement
7. The team is clear about what we expect from each other in order to get the job done.
Yes No Needs Improvement
8. Team members keep one another informed of issues affecting the team.
Yes No Needs Improvement
9. The team listens to each other's ideas. Input is solicited from all team members.
Yes No Needs Improvement
10. Team members recognized and appreciated for the work we do.
Yes No Needs Improvement
11. The team has a set meeting time.
Yes No Needs Improvement
12. The meeting time is effective and productive.
Yes No Needs Improvement
13. The team is productive and proud of our accomplishments (team spirit).
Yes No Needs Improvement

(Pickett & Gerlach, 2004, Supervising Paraeducators in Educational Settings)

Effective teams should be able to answer yes to all of the above questions. Based on this assessment, our team can improve in the following areas:

PLANNING ACTIVITY

Learning School Policies and Procedures

What does a paraeducator need to know about district policies and procedures?

- ☐ 1.
- ☐ 2.
- ☐ 3.
- ☐ 4.
- ☐ 5.

What does a paraeducator need to know regarding supporting curriculum and instruction?

- ☐ 1.
- ☐ 2.
- ☐ 3.
- ☐ 4.
- ☐ 5.

What does a paraeducator need to know regarding student behavior/discipline?

- ☐ 1.
- ☐ 2.
- ☐ 3.
- ☐ 4.
- ☐ 5.

Assisting students with special needs (what does the paraeducator need to know?)

- ☐ 1.
- ☐ 2.
- ☐ 3.
- ☐ 4.
- ☐ 5.

Training and professional development

- ☐ 1.
- ☐ 2.
- ☐ 3.
- ☐ 4.
- ☐ 5.

Maintaining ethics and professionalism

- ☐ 1.
- ☐ 2.
- ☐ 3.
- ☐ 4.
- ☐ 5.

The Teacher's Role

What are major responsibilities for teachers?

Teachers have responsibility for supervising and integrating paraeducators into learning environments. List responsibilities:

- ☐ 1.
- ☐ 2.
- ☐ 3.
- ☐ 4.
- ☐ 5.

Beginning the school year

(List of things to do)

- ☐ 1.
- ☐ 2.
- ☐ 3.
- ☐ 4.
- ☐ 5.

Introducing paraeducators to your classroom

- ☐ 1.
- ☐ 2.
- ☐ 3.
- ☐ 4.
- ☐ 5.

Managing paraeducators

- ☐ 1.
- ☐ 2.
- ☐ 3.
- ☐ 4.
- ☐ 5.

Assigning tasks

Decide which tasks and duties could be delegated.

- ☐ 1.
- ☐ 2.
- ☐ 3.
- ☐ 4.
- ☐ 5.

The Principal's Role

What are your major responsibilities?

The principal and/or other school administrators have the primary responsibility for:

Hiring paraeducators

Too often job expectations for paraeducators are vague, misleading, and even inappropriate. A clear job description will clarify the roles of the paraeducator in the school program and help you start the hiring process on solid footing.

- ☐ 1.
- ☐ 2.
- ☐ 3.
- ☐ 4.

Job descriptions

Use district-level job descriptions to provide the foundation for school-generated job descriptions. Job descriptions for paraeducators should include the following:

- ☐ 1.
- ☐ 2.
- ☐ 3.
- ☐ 4.

Creating a professional climate

- ☐ 1.
- ☐ 2.
- ☐ 3.
- ☐ 4.

Providing building and job orientation

- ☐ 1.
- ☐ 2.
- ☐ 3.

Sharing school policies and procedures

- ☐ 1.
- ☐ 2.
- ☐ 3.
- ☐ 4.

Providing training and professional development

- ☐ 1.
- ☐ 2.
- ☐ 3.
- ☐ 4.

TEN CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE TEAMS: FROM BUSINESS RESEARCH JOURNALS

1. **PURPOSE** – Members understanding why the team exists and commitment to accomplishing the mission of the team. Team goals are clear.
2. **PRIORITIES** – Members know what needs to be done, by whom, and by when to achieve team goals.
3. **ROLES** – Members know their roles in getting tasks done and how to use the skills and expertise of each member most effectively. Leadership is clearly established.
4. **DECISIONS** – Authority and decision-making lines are clearly understood.
5. **CONFLICT** – Conflict or differences of opinion is dealt with openly and is considered important to decision-making and personal growth.
6. **PERSONALITY TRAITS** – Members feel their unique personalities are appreciated and well utilized.
7. **INPUT AND SUPPORT** – Members are able to share risky ideas and they give input into discussions. There is a supportive atmosphere.
8. **EFFECTIVENESS** – Members find team meetings efficient and productive and look forward to this time together. Teams meet on a regular schedule.
9. **SUCCESS** – Members know clearly when the team has met with success and share in this equally and proudly.
10. **TRAINING** – Opportunities for feedback and updating skills are provided and taken advantage of by team members.

How do these characteristics of team work impact supervision?

Can you think of other characteristics of effective teams you feel are important?

PARAEDUCATOR CODE OF ETHICS

1. Practice the standards of professional and ethical conduct approved by the school/district agency.
2. Recognize and respect the roles of teachers as supervisors and team leaders.
3. Recognize and respect the differences in the roles of teachers, other professional practitioners, and paraeducators.
4. Recognize the teacher's responsibilities for planning learner programs, modifying curriculum and instruction, assessing learner progress, and developing behavior management programs.
5. Perform tasks that are within an identified scope of responsibility for paraeducators in different position levels.
6. Share information with parents about their child's performance as directed by the supervising teacher.
7. Refer concerns expressed by learners or others to the supervising teacher or other professional practitioner.
8. Share appropriate information about learner's performance, behavior, progress, and/or educational program only with the supervising teacher in the appropriate setting.
9. Discuss confidential issues and school problems only with the supervising teacher or designated personnel.
10. Respect the dignity, privacy, and individuality of all learner's, families, and staff members.
11. Refrain from engaging in discriminatory practices based on a learner's disability, race, sex, cultural background or religion.
12. Follow the guidelines established by the district agency to protect the health, safety, and well-being of all learners and staff.
13. Represent the school district or agency in a positive manner.
14. Follow the chain of command established by the district to address policy questions, system issues, and personnel practices.
15. When problems cannot be resolved, utilize the agency's grievance procedure.
16. Participate with administrators and other stakeholders in creating and implementing comprehensive systems of professional development for paraeducators.
17. Participate in continuing staff development.
18. Know school policies and procedures.

Supervising Paraeducators in Educational Settings: A Team Approach, 2nd Edition, Pickett and Gerlach, 2003, Pro*ed, Austin, TX.

DISCUSSION ACTIVITY: CASE STUDIES

Case Study One

Paraeducator - Julie

I am Julie and I have been working as a paraeducator in special education for the past 3 months. I completed high school and was married soon after I graduated. My two children are now in high school and I decided to accept this job to supplement our income so that they can go to college. I really like working with children and have been active in elementary PTA, was a Girl Scout leader, and taught in our local Sunday school. In fact, there was a boy in my class who had a developmental disability and I liked the challenge of finding ways to make him feel as though he was part of the group.

When I took this job, I was briefed on district policy with regard to salary, fringe benefits, working hours, vacation, and so on. In addition, I was told about the chain of command in the schools and the supervisor very briefly described my role and responsibilities as a paraeducator. I was told that Mr. White would be the classroom teacher I would be working with and that I would meet him when I reported to work. The supervisor said Mr. White would give me information about the specific tasks I would be expected to perform and the methods and strategies he would expect me to use to carry out the activities.

From the day I walked into the classroom, we have never had a formal discussion about what he expects me to do: there is always some reason why we can't sit down and talk. We can never meet during his prep periods because he is always too busy doing lesson plans to talk to me. When I suggested we meet after school, he told me that would be impossible because he either has graduate classes or meetings to attend. Then on one of the days when he was "free," I really had to get home to take one of my kids to the doctor.

I never know in advance what he wants me to do or how he wants it to be done. Just before he does something in the class, he will say, "Julie, take this group and follow my plans." I have no real idea about what to do, except to try to do what I see him doing while I sit in the back of the room watching him teach the lessons as he has asked me to do. When I am teaching, he frequently breaks into what I am doing and corrects me right in front of the students. I don't have the guts to tell him how this makes me feel—so I save it up until I get home, and my family bears the brunt of all my frustrations.

However, what really has me worried is what his correcting me in front of the students might be doing to my ability to work with them. Today it came to a head when he had to leave the room and I was left alone with the group. I asked one of the students who is rather difficult to work with to join us for an activity. He responded by looking straight at me and saying, "No, I don't want to, and I don't have to because you're just the 'para,' and you can't tell me what to do." I wanted to cry and quit right then—but I didn't. Where do I go from here?

Teacher - Ken

I am Ken a high school teacher who has been assigned my first paraeducator after teaching for 12 years. This was done because several special education students were assigned to my class as part of the district's efforts to place them in what the district calls the "least restrictive" environment. I wish they had asked me whether I wanted someone or not because I am really a loner and have very strict rules about how things are to be done in my classroom. I've never worked with anyone before in my classroom and I'm not really sure that I think it is worth the time to plan for another adult, especially someone who is not trained to be a teacher much less to work with students with special needs.

At any rate, Julie walked into my room three months ago, just before school began, and said she was the paraeducator assigned to me. I asked her if she had been told what her duties were and she informed me that they had been explained to her at a meeting at the district office. I wish they told me what I could expect her to do because I have no idea what goes on in those "briefing" sessions nor have I seen a copy of a job description for paraeducator. I asked her to sit in the back of the room and watch for a while so she could get the hang of how I work. I told her that we'd get together later when I had some free time to talk to her.

During the first few days, I never had time to talk to her. I had lesson plans to develop. I have four different preparations that really take a lot of time. I'm also taking a second master's and I have to leave three days a week almost immediately after school, so for me, just sitting down to talk is a problem. I wish there was time during the day to do this, but I'm just too busy with the kids and the planning to talk to her.

I finally decided that I'd let her review some of the skills I had already taught the students. So, I gave her my plans and told her to follow them religiously. However, she never did it exactly the way I wanted it to be done—she apparently thought it didn't make much difference how she did it as long as she felt comfortable, so what was I to do? I told her to do it the way I had written it and not to use her own methods.

Three months have gone by and I'm still as harried as I was before if not more so. And to make matters worse, she seems to be having problems controlling the kids in the classroom. It started when I had to leave for an emergency meeting and Julie was left in charge. I'm not sure what she did wrong, but she is having real trouble dealing with one of the kids and it seems to have an impact on the way some of the other students are responding to her. Maybe I should find the time to talk to her about how she deals with the problems of integrating the paraeducator into the program.

A Problem Solving Activity -- Case Study One

1. Describe the problem from the paraeducators point of view. (This may include attitudes, actions, and other factors described in the case study.)

2. Describe the problem from the teacher's point of view.

3. What behavior(s) does the teacher need to change?

4. What behavior(s) does the paraeducator need to change?

5. Discuss and list desired goal(s) for the team.

6. How can they work together to achieve the goal and to be a better instructional team? What additional information, skills, or other resources will they need to achieve the goal?

Case Study Two

Paraeducator - Sara

I am Sara and I have been a paraeducator for almost twenty-five years. I started working in an elementary school and did lunchroom duty, monitored the playground, and helped the teacher in the classroom. About 15 years ago, the principal asked me how I would feel about working in a new special education program. I've worked in several special education classes—everything from programs for kids with severe and multiple disabilities to resource rooms. I've seen teachers come and I've seen them go. However, I'm still around because I love working with special education children and have made a lot of good friends in the building. Over the years, I've had a chance to learn about what works and what doesn't work.

I've worked with some really terrific teachers and some that were not so good. In some cases, I was always the one who had to do all of the dirty work or the jobs that bored them—even though my title is Instructional Assistant and I'm supposed to work directly with the students. Other teachers thought they were being “good” to me by treating me as an equal with exactly the same responsibilities as theirs—even though I'm paid a whole lot less than they are. The folks that really drove me crazy were the ones “who had all the answers” and expected me to follow their rules to the “T”. Despite these problems, if they were willing to take time to get to know me and discuss their expectations, we were usually able to work out our differences and get along well.

This year I've been assigned to work with a new teacher fresh out of college with no experience and a lot of new theories and bright ideas. On the first day of school, we had a conference and she outlined what she wanted me to do. Basically, as I see it she expects me to return to the status that I had when I first started twenty years ago. I am supposed to escort the children to the lunchroom, the playground, speech therapy, etc., keep the attendance records, do the toileting, keep the room neat, and generally stay out of her way. She does let me play records and tell stories during the rest period.

Now she has developed a “new” program plan for James and all of a sudden has asked me to help implement it. I don't think it's going to work because Mrs. Adams tried something similar last year and we had to change it several times. By the way, Mrs. Adams was one of the best teachers I've ever worked with. She had a great sense of humor, always included me in on the fun things, changed diapers herself once in a while because she believed that toilet training was part of the instructional process, asked me what I thought about her ideas and what was going on in the class and when I talked, she listened.

I'd like to talk to Ms. Brown about James—but I've got a couple of problems. She hasn't asked me about what I think and she really seems more interested in trying out her theories than she is in hearing from me. In fact, if I had to describe her I'd say she is very dictatorial. Besides, the older I get the nicer it is to just do my job and go home rather than taking orders from someone who doesn't know half as much as I do about teaching special education kids. On the other hand—with a few minor changes the goals and activities she has planned for James would probably work—maybe.

Case Study Two

Teacher-Anne

My name is Anne and this is my first teaching job. My undergraduate degree is in Special Education and I have a Master's as well. I have had some teaching experience, but only as a student teacher. I've really been looking forward to being in charge of my own classroom, and putting the techniques I've worked so hard to learn to work. There was one thing, however, that no one prepared me for when I was in college—that is that I would be expected to supervise someone old enough to be my mother who also has more than 25 years experience. But I do think I'm lucky to have an aide to help out with all of the little things that have to be done in the classroom so I can spend a lot of individual time with the students.

I really feel that as the teacher, I am the person who is responsible for what goes on in the classroom and that I will be held accountable for the good and the bad. That is why, after thinking it over, I decided that the best way to use my aide was to have her do the non-instructional chores and clerical duties. Besides, since Sara is so much older than I am and really has a lot of experience, I decided that it was very important to establish myself as the authority figure. This isn't always easy because working with Sara can be a little intimidating. She really gets along well with the other teachers in the building, and they all rave about her and tell me how lucky I am to have her.

There is a child in the class who seems to fit an almost textbook picture of a syndrome that I've read about but have never seen. I'm sure that he will benefit from a new technique that has been developed to cope with such a youngster and his behavior. I have laid out, in great detail, the type of interventions that I want to use and have started to follow the program. I've decided, however, that if it is going to work, Sara is going to have to be involved as well because everything has to be done consistently and systematically.

When I asked her to help implement the program, she didn't ask any questions or say anything—she just smiled a Mona Lisa smile. Later that day she started telling me about how terrific Mrs. Adams was and what a terrific teacher she was. She's done this before and I'm getting a little tired of it. In any event, I'm really more concerned about James and meeting his needs. I'd like to talk to Sara about it. But I don't want her to think I don't know what I'm doing and I certainly don't want to diminish my authority in the classroom. What can I do?

© Pickett, A. L. and Gerlach, K., 2003, Supervising Paraeducators in Educational Settings, 2nd Edition, Austin, Texas, Pro*ed Publishing.

A Problem Solving Activity -- Case Study Two

1. Describe the problem from the paraeducators point of view. (This may include attitudes, actions, and other factors described in the case study.)
2. Describe the problem from the teacher's point of view.
3. What behavior(s) does the teacher need to change?
4. What behavior(s) does the paraeducator need to change?
5. Discuss and list desired goal(s) for the team.
6. How can they work together to achieve the goal and to be a better instructional team? What additional information, skills, or other resources will they need to achieve the goal?

Case Study Three

It is one o'clock in the afternoon and the teacher became ill. The principal sends the teacher home and asks the paraeducator to be in charge of the class for the rest of the afternoon. The paraeducator was told to teach the lessons to the entire class as scheduled in the lesson plan book.

- a) How do you feel about this situation?
 - b) Discuss this case from the perspective of the administrator, teacher and paraeducator.
 - c) What are the professional and ethical implications of this case?
-

Case Study Four

John, a student with special needs, has disrupted the classroom several times this semester. The teacher has just about given up on him. Today, the teacher said to Jane, the paraeducator, "Take him, keep him busy. I want to work with students who really want to learn. I'm assigning you to work just with him."

- a) How do you feel about paraeducators working with the most challenging students?
 - b) What should have been done differently?
 - c) What are the professional and ethical implications of this case?
-

Case Study Five

Karen Adams has been assigned to David Bowen's classroom. On the first day of school, Mr. Bowen introduces himself and the paraeducator by saying, "I am Mr. Bowen, your teacher, and this is Karen. Karen is a helping teacher for Tommy, Susan, and Mark."

- a) How do you feel about Mr. Bowen introducing Karen by her first name?
- b) Discuss the potential problems that could result by assigning the paraeducator to work with a child rather than a class or program.
- c) How could this be handled differently?
- d) What are the professional and ethical implications of this case?

PLANNING AHEAD FORM

Paraeducator:			
General education teacher:			
Special education teacher:			
Subject area/class:			
Week of:			
Days/times:			
	Activities in the general classroom	Names of target students	Responsibilities and description of modifications or adaptations for inclusion
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			

PARAEDUCATOR CLASSROOM DUTIES LIST

[illegible]

Standards for Paraprofessionals Serving Individuals with Exceptional Learning Needs

THE PARAPROFESSIONAL IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

For more than 50 years, paraprofessionals have helped special educators provide important services to students with exceptional learning conditions. Historically, they provided services ranging from clerical tasks to assisting with individualized functional living tasks. Today they have become an essential part of the special education team in delivering individualized services and playing an increasingly prominent role in the instruction of individuals with exceptional learning needs at all ages. According to the Study of Personnel Needs in Special Education (SPENSE, n.d.), today paraprofessionals in the United States spend at least 10% of their time on the following activities:

- Providing instructional support in small groups.
- Providing one-to-one instruction.
- Modifying materials.
- Implementing behavior plans.
- Monitoring hallways, study halls, etc.
- Meeting with teachers.
- Collecting data on students.
- Providing personal care assistance.

The qualified special education paraprofessional is an employee who performs tasks as prescribed and is supervised by a fully licensed special education professional. Qualified paraprofessionals deliver individualized services to individuals with exceptional learning needs in a wide variety of settings, including general education classes, community-based functional learning sites, and just about everywhere that a special education professional can be found.

Paraprofessionals bring a wide variety of backgrounds and experience to their jobs (SPENSE, n.d.). In the United States, 29% have high school diplomas, 38% have completed some college, and 32% hold an associate's degree or higher. Paraprofessionals with college experience have increased confidence in collaborating and communicating with teachers. The majority of paraprofessionals are supervised by special education teachers and overwhelmingly they feel supported by their special education supervisors.

To ensure that paraprofessionals have the required skills for their expanded roles, CEC, in collaboration with the National Resource Center for Paraeducators, developed and validated the following preparation standards for paraprofessionals who serve individuals with exceptional learning needs. CEC expects that agencies will ensure that all paraprofessionals working with students with exceptional learning needs have, at a minimum, mastered these standards.

In addition, paraprofessionals should have available ongoing, effective, continuing training with professional educators and training that is specifically targeted for paraprofessionals.

SPECIAL EDUCATION PARAEDUCATOR EVALUATION FORMS

The following charts are tools paraeducators and paraeducator training programs can use to ensure that they are meeting the CEC Standards for Special Education Paraeducators.

Form 1 is a tool paraeducator training programs can use to evaluate whether or not their program sufficiently addresses the CEC Standards for the Preparation of Special Education

Paraeducators. Preparation programs can use the chart in several ways. If developing a new program, faculty can use the chart to ensure that the essential knowledge and skills are included in the course curriculum. This can be done by cross-referencing each of the standards to the course content, field experiences, etc. Programs can also use these standards to ensure that their assessments adequately evaluate the paraeducator's knowledge and skills. This can be done by cross-referencing required assessments to each of the standards.

Form 2 is a self-evaluation instrument designed to be used by students in paraeducator training programs to evaluate their

progress in learning and applying the paraeducator knowledge and skills. Students can use this as a self-assessment tool as they move through the program, checking off each knowledge and skill as it is mastered. This could also be used as a summative assessment at the end of the training program.

REFERENCES

Study of Personnel Needs in Special Education, Table 2.91. (n.d.). Retrieved October 24, 2003, from http://ferdig.coe.ufl.edu/spense/scripts/tables/htdocs/TABLE2_91.htm

CEC Knowledge and Skill Base for All Entry-Level Special Education Paraeducators

Standard #1: Foundations	
Knowledge:	
PE1K1	Purposes of programs for individuals with exceptional learning needs.
PE1K2	Basic educational terminology regarding students, programs, roles, and instructional activities.
Skills:	
Standard #2: Development and Characteristics of Learners	
Knowledge:	
PE2K1	Effects an exceptional condition(s) can have on an individual's life.
Skills:	
Standard #3: Individual Learning Differences	
Knowledge:	
PE3K1	Rights and responsibilities of families and children as they relate to individual learning needs.
PE3K2	Indicators of abuse and neglect.
Skills:	
PE3S1	Demonstrate sensitivity to the diversity of individuals and families.
Standard #4: Instructional Strategies	
Knowledge:	
PE4K1	Basic instructional and remedial strategies and materials.
PE4K2	Basic technologies appropriate to individuals with exceptional learning needs.
Skills:	
PE4S1	Use strategies, equipment, materials, and technologies, as directed, to accomplish instructional objectives.
PE4S2	Assist in adapting instructional strategies and materials as directed.
PE4S3	Use strategies as directed to facilitate effective integration into various settings.
PE4S4	Use strategies that promote the learner's independence as directed.
PE4S5	Use strategies as directed to increase the individual's independence and confidence.
Standard #5: Learning Environments and Social Interactions	
Knowledge:	
PE5K1	Demands of various learning environments.
PE5K2	Rules and procedural safeguards regarding the management of behaviors of individuals with exceptional learning needs.
Skills:	
PE5S1	Establish and maintain rapport with learners.
PE5S2	Use universal precautions and assist in maintaining a safe, healthy learning environment.
PE5S3	Use strategies for managing behavior as directed.
PE5S4	Use strategies as directed, in a variety of settings, to assist in the development of social skills.
Standard #6: Language	
Knowledge:	
PE6K1	Characteristics of appropriate communication with stakeholders.

Skills:	
Standard #7: Instructional Planning	
Knowledge:	
Skills:	
PE7S1	Follow written plans, seeking clarification as needed.
PE7S2	Prepare and organize materials to support teaching and learning as directed.
Standard #8: Assessment	
Knowledge:	
PE8K1	Rationale for assessment.
Skills:	
PE8S1	Demonstrate basic collection techniques as directed.
PE8S2	Make and document objective observations as directed.
Standard #9: Professional and Ethical Practice	
Knowledge:	
PE9K1	Ethical practices for confidential communication about individuals with exceptional learning needs.
PE9K2	Personal cultural biases and differences that affect one's ability to work with others.
Skills:	
PE9S1	Perform responsibilities as directed in a manner consistent with laws and policies.
PE9S2	Follow instructions of the professional.
PE9S3	Demonstrate problem solving, flexible thinking, conflict management techniques, and analysis of personal strengths and preferences.
PE9S4	Act as a role model for individuals with exceptional learning needs.
PE9S5	Demonstrate commitment to assisting learners in achieving their highest potential.
PE9S6	Demonstrate the ability to separate personal issues from one's responsibilities as a paraeducator.
PE9S7	Maintain a high level of competence and integrity.
PE9S8	Exercise objective and prudent judgment.
PE9S9	Demonstrate proficiency in academic skills, including oral and written communication.
PE9S10	Engage in activities to increase one's own knowledge and skills.
PE9S11	Engage in self-assessment.
PE9S12	Accept and use constructive feedback.
PE9S13	Demonstrate ethical practices as guided by the CEC Code of Ethics and other standards and policies.
Standard #10: Collaboration	
Knowledge:	
PE10K1	Common concerns of families of individuals with exceptional learning needs.
PE10K2	Roles of stakeholders in planning an individualized program.
Skills:	
PE10S1	Assist in collecting and providing objective, accurate information to professionals.
PE10S2	Collaborate with stakeholders as directed.
PE10S3	Foster respectful and beneficial relationships.
PE10S4	Participate as directed in conferences as members of the educational team.
PE10S5	Function in a manner that demonstrates a positive regard for the distinctions between roles and responsibilities of paraeducators and those of professionals.

FORM 1
Special Education Paraeducator Training Program Evaluation:
Are the Standards Addressed and Assessed?

<i>Standard</i>	<i>What opportunities do candidates have to master this standard?</i>	<i>How does the program assess that candidates have mastered this standard?</i>
Standard 1: Foundations		
Knowledge:		
PE1K1 Purposes of programs for individuals with exceptional learning needs.		
PE1K2 Basic educational terminology regarding students, programs, roles, and instructional activities.		
Standard 2: Development and Characteristics of Learners		
Knowledge:		
PE2K1 Effects an exceptional condition(s) can have on an individual's life.		
Standard 3: Individual Learning Differences		
Knowledge:		
PE3K1 Rights and responsibilities of families and children as they relate to individual learning needs.		
PE3K2 Indicators of abuse and neglect.		
Skills:		
PE3S1 Demonstrate sensitivity to the diversity of individuals and families.		
Standard 4: Instructional Strategies		
Knowledge:		
PE4K1 Basic instructional and remedial strategies and materials.		
PE4K2 Basic technologies appropriate to individuals with exceptional learning needs.		
Skills:		
PE4S1 Use strategies, equipment, materials, and technologies, as directed, to accomplish instructional objectives.		
PE4S2 Assist in adapting instructional strategies and materials as directed.		
PE4S3 Use strategies as directed to facilitate effective integration into various settings.		
PE4S4 Use strategies that promote the learner's independence as directed.		
PE4S5 Use strategies as directed to increase the individual's independence and confidence.		

continued

FORM 1 continued

<i>Standard</i>	<i>What opportunities do candidates have to master this standard?</i>	<i>How does the program assess that candidates have mastered this standard?</i>
Standard 5: Learning Environments and Social Interactions		
Knowledge:		
PE5K1 Demands of various learning environments.		
PE5K2 Rules and procedural safeguards regarding the management of behaviors of individuals with exceptional learning needs.		
Skills:		
PE5S1 Establish and maintain rapport with learners.		
PE5S2 Use universal precautions and assist in maintaining a safe, healthy learning environment.		
PE5S3 Use strategies for managing behavior as directed.		
PE5S4 Use strategies as directed, in a variety of settings, to assist in the development of social skills.		
Standard 6: Language		
Knowledge:		
PE6K1 Characteristics of appropriate communication with stakeholders.		
Standard 7: Instructional Planning		
Skills:		
PE7S1 Follow written plans, seeking clarification as needed.		
PE7S2 Prepare and organize materials to support teaching and learning as directed.		
Standard 8: Assessment		
Knowledge:		
PE8K1 Rationale for assessment.		
Skills:		
PE8S1 Demonstrate basic collection techniques as directed.		
PE8S2 Make and document objective observations as directed.		
Standard 9: Professional and Ethical Practice		
Knowledge:		
PE9K1 Ethical practices for confidential communication about individuals with exceptional learning needs.		
PE9K2 Personal cultural biases and differences that affect one's ability to work with others.		

continued

FORM 1 continued

<i>Standard</i>		<i>What opportunities do candidates have to master this standard?</i>	<i>How does the program assess that candidates have mastered this standard?</i>
Skills:			
PE9S1	Perform responsibilities as directed in a manner consistent with laws and policies.		
PE9S2	Follow instructions of the professional.		
PE9S3	Demonstrate problem-solving, flexible thinking, conflict management techniques, and analysis of personal strengths and preferences.		
PE9S4	Act as a role model for individuals with exceptional learning needs.		
PE9S5	Demonstrate commitment to assisting learners in achieving their highest potential.		
PE9S6	Demonstrate the ability to separate personal issues from one's responsibilities as a paraeducator.		
PE9S7	Maintain a high level of competence and integrity.		
PE9S8	Exercise objective and prudent judgment.		
PE9S9	Demonstrate proficiency in academic skills, including oral and written communication.		
PE9S10	Engage in activities to increase one's own knowledge and skills.		
PE9S11	Engage in self-assessment.		
PE9S12	Accept and use constructive feedback.		
PE9S13	Demonstrate ethical practices as guided by the CEC Code of Ethics and other standards and policies.		
Standard 10: Collaboration			
Knowledge:			
PE10K1	Common concerns of families of individuals with exceptional learning needs.		
PE10K2	Roles of stakeholders in planning an individualized program.		
Skills:			
PE10S1	Assist in collecting and providing objective, accurate information to professionals.		
PE10S2	Collaborate with stakeholders as directed.		
PE10S3	Foster respectful and beneficial relationships.		
PE10S4	Participate as directed in conferences as members of the educational team.		
PE10S5	Function in a manner that demonstrates a positive regard for the distinctions between roles and responsibilities of paraeducators and those of professionals.		

FORM 2
Special Education Paraeducator Self-Evaluation:
Have I Mastered the Standards?

<i>Standard</i>		<i>What is my level of mastery of this standard?</i>	
		<i>Novice</i>	<i>Proficient</i>
Standard 1: Foundations			
Knowledge:			
PE1K1	Purposes of programs for individuals with exceptional learning needs.		
PE1K2	Basic educational terminology regarding students, programs, roles, and instructional activities.		
Standard 2: Development and Characteristics of Learners			
Knowledge:			
PE2K1	Effects an exceptional condition(s) can have on an individual's life.		
Standard 3: Individual Learning Differences			
Knowledge:			
PE3K1	Rights and responsibilities of families and children as they relate to individual learning needs.		
PE3K2	Indicators of abuse and neglect.		
Skills:			
PE3S1	Demonstrate sensitivity to the diversity of individuals and families.		
Standard 4: Instructional Strategies			
Knowledge:			
PE4K1	Basic instructional and remedial strategies and materials.		
PE4K2	Basic technologies appropriate to individuals with exceptional learning needs.		
Skills:			
PE4S1	Use strategies, equipment, materials, and technologies, as directed, to accomplish instructional objectives.		
PE4S2	Assist in adapting instructional strategies and materials as directed.		
PE4S3	Use strategies as directed to facilitate effective integration into various settings.		
PE4S4	Use strategies that promote the learner's independence as directed.		
PE4S5	Use strategies as directed to increase the individual's independence and confidence.		
Standard 5: Learning Environments and Social Interactions			
Knowledge:			
PE5K1	Demands of various learning environments.		

continued

FORM 2 *continued*

Standard		What is my level of mastery of this standard?	
		Novice	Proficient
PE5K2	Rules and procedural safeguards regarding the management of behaviors of individuals with exceptional learning needs.		
Skills:			
PE5S1	Establish and maintain rapport with learners.		
PE5S2	Use universal precautions and assist in maintaining a safe, healthy learning environment.		
PE5S3	Use strategies for managing behavior as directed.		
PE5S4	Use strategies as directed, in a variety of settings, to assist in the development of social skills.		
Standard 6: Language			
Knowledge:			
PE6K1	Characteristics of appropriate communication with stakeholders.		
Standard 7: Instructional Planning			
Skills:			
PE7S1	Follow written plans, seeking clarification as needed.		
PE7S2	Prepare and organize materials to support teaching and learning as directed.		
Standard 8: Assessment			
Knowledge:			
PE8K1	Rationale for assessment.		
Skills:			
PE8S1	Demonstrate basic collection techniques as directed.		
PE8S2	Make and document objective observations as directed.		
Standard 9: Professional and Ethical Practice			
Knowledge:			
PE9K1	Ethical practices for confidential communication about individuals with exceptional learning needs.		
PE9K2	Personal cultural biases and differences that affect one's ability to work with others.		
Skills:			
PE9S1	Perform responsibilities as directed in a manner consistent with laws and policies.		
PE9S2	Follow instructions of the professional.		
PE9S3	Demonstrate problem-solving, flexible thinking, conflict management techniques, and analysis of personal strengths and preferences.		

continued

FORM 2 continued

<i>Standard</i>		<i>What is my level of mastery of this standard?</i>	
		<i>Novice</i>	<i>Proficient</i>
PE9S4	Act as a role model for individuals with exceptional learning needs.		
PE9S5	Demonstrate commitment to assisting learners in achieving their highest potential.		
PE9S6	Demonstrate the ability to separate personal issues from one's responsibilities as a paraeducator.		
PE9S7	Maintain a high level of competence and integrity.		
PE9S8	Exercise objective and prudent judgment.		
PE9S9	Demonstrate proficiency in academic skills, including oral and written communication.		
PE9S10	Engage in activities to increase one's own knowledge and skills.		
PE9S11	Engage in self-assessment.		
PE9S12	Accept and use constructive feedback.		
PE9S13	Demonstrate ethical practices as guided by the CEC Code of Ethics and other standards and policies.		
Standard 10: Collaboration			
Knowledge:			
PE10K1	Common concerns of families of individuals with exceptional learning needs.		
PE10K2	Roles of stakeholders in planning an individualized program.		
Skills:			
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PE10S2	Collaborate with stakeholders as directed.		
PE10S3	Foster respectful and beneficial relationships.		
PE10S4	Participate as directed in conferences as members of the educational team.		
PE10S5	Function in a manner that demonstrates a positive regard for the distinctions between roles and responsibilities of paraeducators and those of professionals.		

TEACHER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PARAEDUCATORS

Our school district employs paraeducators to assist with instruction. They are seen as important members of our educational team.

1. Did your student teaching experience provide any opportunity to work with them?
2. How would you define the term "Paraeducator?"
3. How do you see their role with students and faculty?
4. How comfortable are you directing and managing the work of paraeducators?
5. Both NCLB and IDEA state that paraprofessionals must be "appropriately supervised." How would you define "appropriate supervision?"
6. Have you ever supervised any adult in a work setting?
7. What are some of the duties you would assign a paraeducator?
8. What do you see as the main responsibilities of a supervisor of paraeducators?

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Dr. Kent Gerlach is a Professor in the Department of Instructional Development and Leadership at Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, Washington. Kent has presented staff development workshops for teachers, administrators, and paraeducators throughout the United States and Canada. He has been recognized nationally for his contributions, research, and publications on paraeducator issues including their supervision, employment, and training. He has served as a keynote presenter at numerous professional conferences and meetings, and has presented workshops on teaming and collaboration at numerous local and state educational agencies. Kent co-authored the texts "Supervising Paraeducators in Educational Settings: A Team Approach," and "Paraeducators in School Settings," both published by Pro*ed Publishers. Kent is also the author of "Let's Team Up: A Checklist for Paraeducators, Teachers and Principals," published by the National Education Association and the Council for Exceptional Children. In addition, he has authored several journal articles, book chapters, and training materials dealing with collaboration and team building, and the legal and ethical issues affecting the roles of paraeducators and their supervisors. Kent is the recipient of several teaching awards, including the PLU Faculty Achievement Award and PLU Teaching Excellence Award. During the year 2001, Kent resided in Washington, DC where he served as a consultant to several organizations including Council for Exceptional Children, National Education Association, National State Directors of Special Education, and the IDEA Partnerships. He has held faculty appointments at the University of Hawaii, University of Washington (Seattle), Augustana College (Sioux Falls), and the University of Texas at Austin. Currently he serves on the Editorial Board of the Council for Learning Disabilities, the Council for Exceptional Children's Division on Developmental Disabilities, and the Council for Exceptional Children's Teacher Education Division. He also serves on the Editorial Boards of the Thompson Publishing Group, Title One Monitor, and is a consultant to the National Resource Center for Paraprofessionals.

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